

Hafa Adai!

Dr. Ramsey's wrongful termination suit is dismissed. **PAGE 3**
LDTF has so far raised over \$100K in in-kind donations. **PAGE 5**

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75¢

DUE TO YUTU'S DEVASTATION

CUC collection plunges 60.47 pct.

» **CUC power revenue collection drops from \$10.6M to only \$4.2M**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

From \$10.6 million in September, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s power billing collection nosedived to just \$4.2 million last November—a steep 60.47-percent decrease—in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu's devastation.

See CUC on **Page 4**

NMC, PSS get ready for temp classrooms

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The first shipment of structures that will later be erected as temporary classrooms arrived in the CNMI last Christmas eve and both the Northern Marianas College and the Public School System are now getting ready

See NMC on **Page 4**

NOTICE

There will be no issue of *Saipan Tribune* on Jan. 1/2, 2019.

Happy Holidays!



HELPING HANDS

Music of the Marianas president J.J. Concepcion and his team pose for a photo with children taking shelter with their families at the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility yesterday morning after handing out relief supplies to each family.

See story on **Page 10**

ERWIN ENCINARES

Future still uncertain for HP, EAD workers

By **JON PEREZ**
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With just three days before their papers expire, a cloud of uncertainty continues to hover over the future of foreign workers who are either under the humanitarian parole program or holders of employment authoriza-

tion documents.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said the Trump administration's anti-immigrant stance has dashed any hopes he had that extending those papers would happen.

"There's [three] more days and we have not received any notice from

See FUTURE on **Page 4**

Gas prices continue to drop

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gas prices in the Commonwealth continue to drop as 2019 approaches, with another 10-cent rollback less than a week since the last.

Another gas price rollback implemented last Monday, less than a week

since the last rollback of gas prices.

This was also the fourth drop in gas prices in less than two months.

Both Mobil Saipan and Shell Saipan brought their gas prices down from \$4.13 per gallon of Extra fuel to \$4.03 per gallon and their Supreme fuel is down from \$4.50 per

See GAS on **Page 4**

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Americans buoyed by a strong economy pushed holiday sales growth to a six-year high.

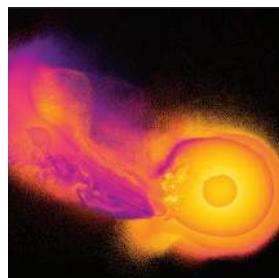
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NATION

raised doubts about U.S. border authorities.

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OFF THE WALL

Uranus is the only planet to spin on its side. Scientists now think they know why.

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Local

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Air Force training at Warning Area 12, Warning Area 517

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. Air Force will conduct open-water training today, Dec. 28, at Warning Area 12 and Warning Area 517, from 10am to 9:30pm.

These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military person-

nel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training.

It is recommended the general public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

W-12 begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest

in international waters.

W-517 begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use. **(PR)**

JKPL closed on Dec. 29, Jan. 1

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed on Saturday, Dec. 29, 2018, and Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019, for the holidays. It will reopen on

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019.

Also, effective Wednesday, Jan. 2, the hours of operation will return to normal hours:

■ Tuesday-Friday: 10am: 6pm

■ Saturday: 9am: 4pm

■ Closed Sundays, Mondays, and holidays

As a reminder, JKPL has many services available to take advantage of: WiFi access, Federal Emergency Management Agency ser-

vices, U.S. Small Business Administration services, black and white printing for FEMA-related documents, computer stations to access FEMA/SBA information, printing, copying, charging station, borrowing books, DVDs, magazines, and other materials, and games.

In addition, JKPL welcomes class visits—a great way to expose students to the many resources at the library. To sched-

ule a class visit, fill out a class visit form three days in advance, available at the library. For more information about class visits, contact the library at (670) 235: READ. **(PR)**

AMP is accessible to public during govt shutdown

During the ongoing shutdown of the federal government due to the lapse of appropriations, national parks will remain as accessible as possible while still following all applicable laws and procedures. Park roads, walking paths, memorials, and the tennis court at American Memorial Park, will remain accessible to visitors, but emergency and rescue services will be limited.

Thanks to a generous donation by the Pacific Historic Parks, the visitor center and bookstore will be open from 9am to 4pm, except last Christmas Day. Restrooms, trash collection, and other daily maintenance will be limited.

Because of the federal government shutdown, NPS social media and websites are not being monitored or updated and may not reflect current conditions. For updates on the shutdown, visit www.doi.gov/shutdown. **(NPS)**

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Dr. Ramsey's wrongful termination suit is dismissed

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has dismissed Dr. Gary Ramsey's wrongful termination lawsuit against the CNMI government, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., and others.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood ruled that Ramsey has failed to state a claim in his first, second, and fourth causes of action "because he does not have a property or liberty interest in the initial grant or privileges or renewal of privileges."

In granting the defendants' motion to dismiss the case, Tydingco-Gatewood said the remaining federal cause of action in Ramsey's lawsuit "does implicate a property interest in existing privileges."

However, the judge said, because that right was not clearly established at the time of the violation, defendants have qualified immunity.

Tydingco-Gatewood said the court declines to exercise jurisdiction over the remaining Commonwealth-law claims in the lawsuit, and therefore grants the motions to dismiss those claims without prejudice.

Dismissed without prejudice means Ramsey can re-file the claims in the future.

The judge then directed the clerk of court to close the case.

Ramsey is a physician specializing in obstetrics, gynecology, and women's health. He worked at the Commonwealth Health Center from 1999 to July 2007, then at the Department of Public Health

until September 2010.

Ramsey alleges in his lawsuit that the Commonwealth and CHCC, which runs CHC, wrongfully denied him medical privileges at the hospital.

He sued the CNMI government, CHCC, CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña, and several other present and former hospital officials.

In November 2017, Ramsey filed a first amended complaint, where he had four federal causes of action based on claims of unlawful deprivation of property and liberty without due process against the Commonwealth, CHC, and several individuals employed by CHC.

He also brought Commonwealth-law claims for tortious interference with contract, tortious interference with covenant of good faith and fair dealing, breach of official duty, conspiracy, and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Ramsey's first cause of action was for unlawful deprivation of property without due process against defendants in their official capacity for the wrongful denial of his current right to hospital privileges at CHC.

He asked for a declaratory judgment "that his privileges are presently in force at CHC" and an injunction prohibiting the defendants from refusing to recognize his privileges.

Ramsey's next three causes of action were federal-law claims for damages. The second cause of action was against then-Public Health secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez for wrongful deprivation of hospital privileges from Dec. 15,

2009, until Dec. 15, 2011.

His third cause of action was against Muña and unnamed defendants for wrongfully interfering with the exercise of his privileges to access and update medical records in October 2013.

Ramsey's final federal cause of action was against Muña, head of CHC OB/GYN department Dr. Jeanolivia Grant, CHCC Medical Affairs director Sherleen Osman, and CHCC legal counsel Nancy Gottfried for failure to "process, approve, acknowledge and recognize renewal of his hospital privileges."

Osman filed a motion to dis-

miss for failure to state a claim and asserting she is entitled to qualified immunity.

Osman argues that Ramsey did not allege sufficient acts that she deprived him of any right. Moreover, she asserts that she is entitled to qualified immunity since Ramsey has no clearly established interest in hospital privileges.

The Commonwealth filed a motion to dismiss the first cause of action for failure to state a claim and the Commonwealth-law causes of action for lack of jurisdiction.

As to the federal cause of action for unlawful deprivation of property, the Common-

wealth argues that there is no cognizable property right in the renewal of hospital privileges, without which Ramsey cannot state a plausible claim for declaratory of injunctive relief.

Grant filed a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim because hospital privileges are neither a property right nor a liberty interest.

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Additionally, Grant asserted qualified immunity.

Muna, Villagomez, and Gottfried each filed a joinder in Grant's motion to dismiss.

Tydingco-Gatewood heard the motions last June 29.

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More sponsors join tomorrow's yearend festivity

IT&E, DFS Saipan, and Coca-Cola and Foremost/Quench have joined the list of sponsors for the #MarianasSTRONG Yearend Celebration and Yutu 5K Holiday Fun Run to the Marianas tomorrow, Dec. 29.

The event will be held at Paseo de Marianas in Gapan, from 5pm to 10pm, and is jointly organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority, PDM Promoters, Japanese Society of the Northern

Mariana Islands, and Japan Northern Marianas Descent Association.

As part of the fundraising for Super Typhoon Yutu relief, a raffle will be held for a Samsung Note 9 donated by IT&E. Raffle tickets will cost \$5 each.

Entertainment for the night will include the annual Mochitsuki Festival, featuring the Japanese traditional pounding of rice in preparation for the new year

at 5:30pm, Marianas Ukulele at 6:30pm, Saipan Music & Dance Studio at 7pm, a magic show with Neil Fama at 7:30pm, Studio 29:11 at 8pm, Alana Ia at 8:30pm, Man Antigu at 9pm, and Su-San Band at 9:30pm.

"We're looking forward to a great celebration on Saturday and invite the community to come and enjoy the evening with us this holiday season," said MVA Community Projects manager Mar-

tin Duenas.

The #MarianasSTRONG Yearend Celebration is intended to mark the resiliency and recovery of the Marianas following Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018.

Activities will include food and drink sales, games, free mochi-tasting, free bouncy house for children, one free round of yoyo play, one free Saipan-da bag per child, and one free Saipan-da pencil per child, while

supplies last. Coupons for games were distributed to local schools, and a limited number of additional coupons will be distributed at the MVA information booth, while supplies last. #MarianasSTRONG T-shirts and a raffle ticket for the Samsung Note 9 will be given away for each donation of \$15 or more, while supplies last.

The Yutu 5K Holiday Fun Run will be held at 5pm from the pedestrian mall flagpole south along Beach Road to the Cabrera Center and back.

The first 100 registrants will receive a holiday hat, and the first 100 finishers will receive a Yutu 5K Holiday Fun Run T-shirt. A special prize will be awarded for the best holiday costume. Registration opens at 4pm. Registration for the race is a \$1 minimum donation, but larger donations are welcomed.

All donations will be given to Karidat Social Services and other relief organizations. Donations of canned goods, clothing, and other items are also welcome. (MVA)

FUTURE

From Page 1

[U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services] or [Department of Homeland Security] whether they would continue or discontinue the humanitarian parole for the CNMI, for spouses or parents of U.S. and [Freely Associated States] citizens, CNMI permanent residents, and those caregivers who take care of the elderly and persons with special needs.

"I also made numerous calls to [USCIS and DHS], but I'm not hopeful anymore. This is an anti-immigrant administration."

Sablan wanted to have legislation that would take care of these workers. "At least they could get NMI residency status, those who are qualified. And at a certain point in their life, if they are qualified, if they choose to apply for a green card. If they are not qualified, they would be eligible to remain as CNMI-only residents."

"Some of these people have been here even before we became a Commonwealth, over 40 years. I could count the number of stateless kids that were born here before 1978 to non-Trust Territory and U.S. citizen parents. Who's going to do their work if they don't get their humanitarian parole? They [USCIS and DHS] should decide now so people can make plans."

Sablan said this would be a good time for Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to use his close ties with the White House. "The governor said he has formed a friendship with

President Trump. Hopefully he would have allowed [the extension]. ...The governor was in Washington D.C. for the funeral of George H.W. Bush. I don't know if he stopped by and met with officials from DHS or USCIS on this very important issue.

"I hope that if they decide to discontinue this, they give a 90-day period for people to make plans so they could exit the Commonwealth without breaking the law and without being overstayers."

Uncertainty

Mildred M. Pabilando and the other 2,000 foreign workers who are under the program continue to wait for USCIS to make a decision. She is under the humanitarian parole program and an EAD holder.

"We're still hoping for some good news. Both of my documents will expire on the same day [Dec. 31] and I'm anxious [about] what would happen next, especially for me. I'm a single mom and I have three kids.

"It's hard to celebrate for the coming year. I have no idea what would happen next and I don't have any back-up plan, that's why it is really scary for me. I'm not prepared to go back home yet. I'm the only one who is working. There's still three days left before Dec. 31, but we have not received any notice from USCIS," Pabilando told *Saipan Tribune*.

She said her humanitarian parole usually arrives in the second week of December. "We're still waiting for

USCIS' decision if there's going to be an extension or not. Our current situation after Super Typhoon Yutu makes it even harder."

"I always have to stop working whenever I renew my EAD. I have to wait for its release, before I return to work. Usually, I receive my humanitarian parole [document] in the second week of December. But I haven't received any."

Pabilando, who works for POI Aviation as an airport service agent at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport, said she immediately applies for her EAD whenever she gets her humanitarian parole "because it takes two to three months for the processing of EADs. Sometimes more than that. The last time I renewed my EAD, I submitted my renewal in December and it went out in April the next year," added Pabilando, who knows of 15 others who are in the same situation.

Foreign worker advocate Itos Feliciano, who is also the moderator of the CNMI Foreign Workers Facebook page, said it would cause a big problem if no decision is made before the expiration at the end of this month.

"Hopefully, the renewal would correspond with the 240-day extension period," he said.

He said that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has assured him that he's doing the best that he can for the extension. "I even suggested that there should be a Plan B, just in case the humanitarian parole and EADs won't

be released before the expiration date. The important thing here is, there's support from the CNMI government."

One solution for those under the humanitarian parole program or EAD holders is to either grant them permanent or CNMI-only residency status, or allow them to apply for a green card so they won't be an additional burden to USCIS.

Feliciano said a lot of foreign workers under the program or EAD holders are worried and are asking for any update. "Two thousand workers would lose their status. I think that's negligence on the part of the federal government. They should have acted on it immediately."

Last October, Torres wrote U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen to raise the workers' concerns. *Saipan Tribune* tried to get an update from the administration but they have not yet to respond as of press time.

Some CNMI guest workers, when Public Law 110-229 or the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 was enacted the following year, were granted humanitarian parole status for various reasons during the transition period. Caregivers were also included.

USCIS issued humanitarian parole to foreign workers who were left without employment status. These workers either had minor children who are U.S. citizens or were given transitional conditional permits (umbrella permits).

NMC

From Page 1

to have places for them.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services announced via its social media page that the first of two shipments for temporary classroom structures arrived last Dec. 24, 2018. In total, the structures would be enough for 66 temporary classrooms split between PSS and NMC.

The announcement, however, did not specify how many tents arrived in the first shipments.

According to CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management public information officer Nadine Deleon Guerrero, counting the number of tents right now would be challenging since the temporary structures each include other extensions such as a washroom and a restroom.

With the tents already on island, both NMC and PSS have already started preparing their respective campuses for the temporary structures.

For PSS, the Koblerville Elementary School campus is currently being prepared for the tents, Muña told *Saipan Tribune*.

"Right now the ground work is being done. They are preparing the land and constructing the forms of the footing," Muña said, adding



Eliptico

that a specific target date for the completion of the preparatory ground work would be discussed at their weekly critical infrastructure task force meeting with the Federal Emergency Management Agency this afternoon. "We meet on a weekly basis with the FEMA task force and get updates from them," he noted, adding that those meetings are usually held Friday afternoon.

Preparations at NMC have also been ongoing, with the soccer field at the As Terlaje campus being graded and leveled.

NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico said in a previous interview that the college is targeting to move back to their As Terlaje campus on Feb. 11, 2019, which would also mark the resumption of morning classes. NMC is currently offering only afternoon and evening classes at the Saipan Southern High School campus.

Eliptico also previously noted that the college would be erecting 24 temporary classrooms. Each structure is able to accommodate 30 students and is complete with air-conditioning and insulation.

Alongside the 24 temporary classroom structures are some of the classrooms that have already been repaired.

The college is scheduled to be fully operational by late January 2019.

GAS

From Page 1

gallon to \$4.40.

The CNMI saw its first gas price rollback of 2018 a month following Super Typhoon Yutu. Mobil brought its prices down from \$4.53 per gallon of Extra fuel to \$4.43 per gallon and its Supreme fuel went down from \$4.90 per gallon to \$4.80.

The second price rollback

of the year was seen early this month. Mobil brought its prices down by 20 cents, dropping its price from \$4.43 per gallon of Extra fuel to \$4.23 per gallon and its Supreme fuel from \$4.80 per gallon to \$4.60.

The third rollback was seen on Dec. 17. Mobil brought its price down from \$4.23 per gallon of Extra fuel to \$4.13 per gallon and its Supreme fuel from \$4.60 per gallon to \$4.50.

CUC

From Page 1

That makes it the lowest amount that CUC collected for power since October 2017, according to acting chief financial officer Corina Magofna in her recent presentation to the CUC board.

The \$4.2 million in power collection is for the month that end-

ed on Nov. 30, 2018, she added.

Power collection for the month of October 2018—when Yutu hit the CNMI—was \$5.3 million, Magofna said.

CUC expects another significant drop in power collection this December.

Yutu struck Saipan and Tinian last Oct. 24 and 25.

Water collection last September amounted to \$763,000; it dropped to

\$461,000 last November—a 39.58-percent decrease.

Last October, water collection was at \$796,000.

Sewer collection was at \$242,000 last September and it dropped to \$115,000 last November, for a 52.47-percent decrease. Last October, sewer collection was at \$239,000.

In total, Magofna said, power, water, and sewer collections for November totaled

\$4,765,902.

Other revenue sources—such as customer deposits, penalties, and miscellaneous—was at \$71,248. This brought to the total collection to \$4,837,150, she said.

Magofna said the actual total revenues for power, water, and sewer was \$6.6 million, while the total projected revenues is \$9.3 million—a 29-percent variance.

LDTF has so far raised over \$100K in donations

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Lady Diann Torres Foundation has already managed to raise at least \$100,000 in in-kind donations for the CNMI's Super Typhoon Yutu relief efforts, according to a foundation representative.

Claudia Flores, the foundation's program coordinator, said yesterday that the foundation has already amassed about \$100,000 worth of in-kind donations for post-recovery efforts on Saipan and Tinian, adding that the number continues to rise.

"We have some local corporate sponsors. ...We also have Guam and Rota involved," she said. She emphasized that the estimated \$100,000 in donations is only for Typhoon Yutu victims and do not include cash.

Ayuda Luta, a relief drive that collected \$8,000 for Rota victims of Typhoon Mangkhut only two weeks after the typhoon, has also helped out in the wake of Yutu. "Since they got hit hard by Typhoon Mangkhut, Rota felt it was time to give back to both Tinian and Saipan," Flores said.

The foundation has also received in-kind donations from both the East Coast and West Coast in the U.S. mainland, such as San Diego's House of Chamorros.

"We have also been reaching out to other shelterees and we are getting involved with other agencies and collaborating with them to give back to our community and get back to normalcy," Flores said.

According to her, the foundation has been working nonstop since Typhoon Mangkhut, which hit Rota and Guam in early September 2018. Super Typhoon Yutu hit Saipan and Tinian in late October 2018.

The in-kind donations include tarps for makeshift roofs, mosquito nets, water, portable stoves, butane gas, adult and baby diapers, among others.

The foundation is still accepting in-kind donations at its office in Su-supe. For more information, contact 235-5383.

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Concepcion: Focus always targets high-end market

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher Concepcion said their focus has always been to attract the

high-end tourism market. "It's what the people of the CNMI want. That's what we need."

He pointed out that not only do high-end tourists have the disposable income to spend, but they are usually more

aware of the environment and the sensitivities of the environment here.

MVA China manager Flo Shi underscored this in her presentation at the recent MVA general membership

meeting this month. The push to target high-end families was one of the marketing directions the MVA China office will take in fiscal year 2019, in addition to promoting strong awareness about the CNMI, in-

creasing diversity, and increasing brand competitiveness.

That marketing strategy includes targeting more margin markets around cities with direct flights, broadening MVA's reach across high potential tourist groups, and exploring the possibility of adding new flights.

When asked to talk more about targeting high-end families in China, Concepcion said the CNMI's No. 1 attraction is its beautiful and natural environment and clean water and air. From the MVA's point of view, he said, its tourism industry partners in the CNMI need to do their part to develop high-end facilities and high-end activities.

"If we advertise ourselves as a high-end destination, we want to make sure that tourists will have that, that we meet their expectations," Concepcion said.

He pointed out that Kensington Hotel Saipan has probably the most high-end prop-



Concepcion

erty in the CNMI right now.

It has a higher price compared to other hotels here and, for Concepcion, that is good because it is taking aim at the target market for the CNMI. He said

tourists visit the Commonwealth because of its clean water and air, which are not found in some destinations in Asia.

The most popular activities for tourists when they come to the CNMI are driving, skydiving, and golf.

In fiscal year 2017, the Marianas received 229,389 visitors from China, an 11.1-percent increase over 2016. MVA said this marked the highest annual visitor arrivals from China in the history of the Marianas and comprised 35 percent of visitor arrivals.

Not only is the total number of visitors on the rise but, more importantly for the MVA, the quality of travelers and their spending habits are also improving.

MVA believes that with proper promotion targeting higher-spending, upper middle-class visitors, as well as more specific marketing promotional activities in China, this will continue to improve.

CHCC: Disaster meds assistance for the uninsured ending Dec. 31

Those with no health insurance are being reminded that the Emergency Prescription Assistance Program will end on

Monday, Dec. 31, 2018, according to a Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. notice yesterday

Supplementing Super Typhoon Yutu disaster recovery, the federally-run EPAP covers new and refill prescriptions issued by Dec. 31, 2018, for those who have no health insurance. All prescriptions processed using EPAP are \$0 copay for the patient.

EPAP-covered prescriptions can be ordered from any of the CNMI's three pharmacies (PHI, Brabu, or CHCC Outpatient Pharmacy). If you have any questions about using EPAP, call the hotline at 1-855-793-7470.

To ensure continuity of care after assistance from EPAP has ended, uninsured individuals are encouraged to apply for the CHCC's income-based sliding fee program. Those enrolled in the sliding fee program are eligible for discounts on prescription medications from the CHCC pharmacy. Applications for the program are available at the CHCC's outpatient pharmacy or at any CHCC registration desk.

For further information on the sliding fee program, contact 234-8950 ext. 3502 or 3007. (PR)

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	New Year's Eve Seafood Night (December 31, 2018) Reg. \$40 Adult / \$20 Child	New Year Brunch (January 01, 2019) Reg. \$32 Adult/\$16 Child New Year Dinner Buffet Reg. \$40 Adult / \$20 Child	

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Christmas Chocolate Cake
RSVN Due: December 21, 2018
\$21 (6.5") | \$36 (7")

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House to act on bill clarifying casino panel oversight

The House of Representatives is expected to act on a bill that would clarify the Commonwealth Casino Commission's powers and make changes in the Commonwealth Code to reflect the commission's unique role in regulating the new gaming industry.

Rep. Joseph P. DeLeon Guerrero (R-Saipan) introduced House Bill 20-82, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1 or the Commonwealth Casino Commission Amendment.

The Senate Gaming Committee, chaired by Sen. Justo S. Quitugua (Ind-Saipan) has recommended its passage.

The committee report states that HB 20-82's purpose is to amend the Commonwealth Code so that the commission's power and duties would be clarified in regulating the casino gaming industry in the CNMI. "...Pursuant to Public Law 18-56, the [CCC] was established to regulate the exclusive casino license in the Third Senatorial District." "Upon confirmation of the members to the CCC, regulations were duly adopted to oversee the casino gaming industry. After several years of implementing and enforcing the regulations of CCC and other permitting agencies of the Commonwealth government, including extensive training attended by CCC, it was pertinent to amend the Commonwealth Code to allow CCC to properly regulate the demands of this unique industry."

The committee said that a lot of the provisions in H.B. 20-82 HD1 are similar to the statutes enacted in Nevada and New Jersey, states where casino gaming is thriving and that also have regulatory agencies that oversee these activities.

"However, unlike Nevada and New Jersey that regulate multiple casino licenses, the CCC is unique in its regulatory duties as it is mandated to impose regulations within federal guidelines over a sole casino licensee accustomed to the Asian market," added the report.

"Due to the controversial nature of the casino industry, and to promote transparency and oversight of the casino industry, your committee further amended the bill to ensure that the Legislature retains its appropriation power with regard to the CCC regulatory fund. Although CCC is an autonomous agency, the committee wanted to mandate that all CCC regulations shall be consistent with CNMI laws."

Quitugua said there are some provisions that allow the commission to set its own rules like travel. "We deleted that and replaced it as recommended by

the governor. The Legislature also wants to continuously appropriate their funding and for them to come back every year to justify their funding."

"We also amended a provision in making all commission employees law enforcers. We changed that section to clarify that only enforcement em-

ployees will be considered officers and not all commission employees."

CCC chair Juan M. Sablan is confident that the bill would

go to the desk of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who in turn would sign it. "There were some changes that incorporated our concerns and now

we think this is a solid bill. Our concerns were already addressed, so we're confident the House would act on it unanimously." (Jon Perez)

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	HRV EX 2WD	JM702620	LUNAR SILVER	\$3,000		TRANSIT 350 HD	JKA83060	INGOT SILVER	\$5,000		TITAN PRO4X 4WD	HN555149	GUN METALLIC	\$7,000
	PILOT EX 2WD	JB004061	LUNAR SILVER	\$4,000		TRANSIT 150 XL LR	JKA83059	OXFORD WHITE	\$4,000		MURANO PLATINUM	HN147924	ARTIC BLUE	\$5,000
	HRV EX 2WD	HM714229	CRYSTAL BLACK	\$4,000		EXPLORER LTD 4WD	JGC88943	PLAT DUNE TRICO	\$5,000		PATHFINDER SV 4WD	HC673748	GUN METALLIC	\$5,000



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Kilili backs relocation of two middle schools

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) is on board with the idea of relocating the Francisco M. Sablan and the Adm. Herbert G. Hopwood middle schools, in the wake of the extensive damage both schools sustained during Super Typhoon Yutu.

Speaking at a news briefing yesterday, Sablan said he has already talked with Education Commissioner Glenn Muña about moving both middle schools from their current location, which are near beaches.

Sablan is hoping a funding bill that was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives last week would hurdle the Senate so it could be signed

by President Donald J. Trump. The CNMI would get at least \$100 million from that bill, and Sablan said a chunk of that amount could be used for disaster recovery efforts.

"We can do better with more money. Hopwood is a school that was built, I think, when I was still 4 years old, maybe. And it is right there by the ocean, like the Francisco M. Sablan [Middle School]. So, it is just right there near the beach," Sablan said.

"I understand that, with [both middle schools], when a storm or the high seas come, the ocean water goes all the way to the classrooms. I really think we need to relocate both schools. We need to move them."

There were plans a week

after Yutu—by the CNMI government and the Federal Emergency Management Agency—of consolidating both middle schools or looking for another facility that's not damaged and fixing it so that classes could be held there.

In fact, Sablan said, the first time the idea of relocating both schools was discussed during the term of former governor Benigno R. Fitial. "I think it was during my second term and it was at Hopwood where I had my public investiture when I made a comment about it. ... We can use money to build a middle school between Koblerville Elementary School and Saipan Southern High School. Build a new middle school there. The governor back then agreed and then, of

course, it ended there."

He added that collaboration is needed to achieve the goal. "...I'd like to help the [PSS] commissioner in moving Hopwood and building a new one, somewhere away from where it is now, the beach. And Francisco M. Sablan [MS], because it is also so close to the ocean and it is also congested."

Sablan said that building a

middle school between KES and Saipan Southern or next to Francisco M. Sablan Middle School "is a viable solution. Then students that go to KES will just move to the [new] middle school, and then to Saipan Southern."

"They [students] would be more comfortable with their environment where they are at. That's my plan [relocation]

and the commissioner [Muña] assured me of his cooperation. I'm happy that he is the commissioner and we could start working with him."

He also had the chance to talk with Northern Marianas College interim president Frankie Eliptico. "He [Eliptico] also asked for my cooperation and I said yes. But that's the last time I heard from him. I can't help him unless he tells me what they need and their plans are."

Probable cause found vs 2 of 4 alleged burglars

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Superior Court found probable cause to warrant the filing of three charges against two of four men who are suspected of breaking into a house in Kagman 3.

During a preliminary hearing yesterday, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo found probable cause to believe that both Amado Kereman and Demson Sachuo may have committed the crimes of conspiracy, burglary, theft, and criminal mischief.

Govendo ordered Kereman and Sachuo, both 18, to respond to the charges.

The two other suspects are Javier Okaruru and Man-

uel Norita, who have not been arrested.

Kereman and Sachuo will be arraigned on Jan. 7, 2019, by Presiding Judge Roberto Naraja.

According to court information, police responded to a burglary in progress on Nov. 27, 2018, at 2:28am in Kagman 3, behind the CYC store.

Police identified the suspects as Kereman and Sachuo.

Kereman refused to give a statement to the police, but Sachuo admitted that it was his idea to break into a neighboring house.

During the preliminary hearing it was learned that Kereman allegedly agreed with Sachuo's plan to burglarize the neighboring home while Okaruru and Norita

stayed back.

The two other suspects, however, allegedly warned Kereman and Sachuo when flashing lights were seen from a distance.

Sachuo told police that he and Kereman took a backpack, a small lamp, and batteries from the house.

During the preliminary hearing, it was uncovered that other stolen items included perfume, watches, and domino chips that have yet to be recovered.

The stolen items came out to a sum of \$1,258, excluding repairs to the burglarized home.

Police charged the two with conspiracy, burglary, and theft and criminal mischief.

A \$20,000 cash bail was imposed on both defendants.

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Interior highlights fiscal accountability in island areas

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of the Interior has applauded the success of the winter meeting of the Island Government Finance Officers Association, which convened in Honolulu, Hawaii from Dec. 4 to Dec. 6.

The association meets twice yearly to encourage finance officers from American Samoa, the CNMI, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands to discuss common challenges and share successful best practices in fiscal accountability and financial management.

“We continue to support the training of island government finance officers in best

practices for fiscal accountability and financial management,” said Doug Domenech, assistant secretary, Insular and International Affairs. “Solid financial accountability is critical for any government in order to effectively manage public resources for the people they serve.”

Forty-three heads of finance and senior accounting officials from throughout the insular governments attended the winter meeting. Topics for the week concentrated on:

- the outturn of FY17 single audits;
- reviewing FY17 Performance scores;
- examining growing unfunded pension and social security liabilities in the in-

sular areas;

- managing procurement and installation of Federal Management Information Systems;

- enhancing insular government finance office performance measures;

- addressing cybersecurity issues; and

- previewing forthcoming Government Accounting Standards Board standards pronouncements and their potential impacts on island governments.

At the conclusion of the meeting, representatives from each insular area presented an IGFOA Action Plan, which summarized commitments to continue implementing concepts presented at the con-

ference. Such commitments include refinement of finance office performance measures, implementation of forthcoming GASB standards, development of Popular Annual Financial Reports, development of cybersecurity plans, and strategies to manage insular government debt.

The IGFOA will reconvene during the summer of 2019 in conjunction with the U.S.-based Government Finance Officers Association. The IGFOA meetings are organized by the Graduate School USA Pacific and Virgin Islands Training Initiatives, all funded through the Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs Technical Assistance Program. (PR)

Music organizations get together for relief distribution in Kagman

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Several music organizations handed out hygiene supplies and tools to repair damaged homes yesterday, starting with shelterees at the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility.

J.J. Concepcion, president of the Music of the Marianas Association, said that Elijah Reyes, owner of Dandan Marianas, spearheaded the effort with the Lady Diann Torres Foundation.

“[Reyes] put together a concert of musicians from Saipan, Guam, Rota, and Tinian on Guam, where all the proceeds went to this cause,” he said.

Concepcion said that about 200 buckets were filled with household supplies such as dishwashing liquid, shampoo, butane gas, and even a hammer. The group also handed out drinking water for the shelterees at the Kagman Emergency Shelter Facility.

There are currently 34 families in the KESF, totaling 136 people. Each family received one bucket and some water.

Of the 200 buckets, 50 are

headed to Tinian, according to Concepcion. The remaining buckets and water were reportedly distributed at other villages, including San Antonio, Koblerville, Chalan Kanoa, and some areas in As Lito.

Concepcion is open to the idea of doing a similar fundraising concert on Saipan—if anyone is interested in getting it together. “...It [would be] quite a task because everybody is busy right now. Everybody is helping each other,” he said.

Claudia Flores, who represented the Lady Diann Torres Foundation during the relief distribution, said their organization has been working non-stop since Typhoon Mangkhut struck Rota in early September.

“...From there, with Super Typhoon Yutu, it got us to work more collaboratively with one another...[We] are more like family now,” she said.

Ayuda Luta, a relief drive that raised over \$8,000 during its first two weeks of solicitation for Typhoon Mangkhut, also helped with the Saipan and Tinian distributions yesterday.



Members of the Island Government Finance Officers Association meet in Honolulu, Hawaii in early December for the association’s winter meeting.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



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Propst is Legislature's next minority leader

By unanimous consent of the incoming minority members, incumbent Rep. Ed Propst of Precinct 1 has been selected to be the minority leader of the 21st House of Representatives.

The other members of the minority include are representative-elect Tina Sablan (Precinct 2), incumbent Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Precinct 3); representative-elect Sheila Babauta (Precinct 4), representative-elect Richard Lizama (Precinct 5), and representative-elect Donald Manglona (Precinct 7).

The group met last Friday to make their selection. Villagomez, who is currently the minority leader of the 20th House, nominated Propst, and urged the other minority members to support him as well. During discussion, Propst described his leadership style as inclusive and supportive, and pledged his commitment to building trust, teamwork, and open communications among the members. Following a question-and-answer, all the members agreed to support Propst as their next minority leader.

Propst thanked his colleagues for their confidence in him, making special note of Villagomez. "Our current minority leader, [Rep.] Edmund Villagomez, graciously offered me his support, and I thank him for passing the torch to me," Propst said. "Edmund has been a mentor, a dear friend, and a minority leader who leads by example with great humility, respect, and compassion for all."

Members of the minority lauded the smooth transition of minority leadership. "It has made me so proud of our team," said Lizama. "I am looking forward to working with minority leader Ed Propst and with everyone as well."

"I'm happy with our decision," Babauta said. "Ed is capable, outspoken, and has the Commonwealth's best interest at heart. We will help him and he will help us be better leaders for the people."

Manglona said: "Ed laid out his platform and I am confident with the goals he set. ...I look forward to working with my colleagues in addressing the Commonwealth's needs as well as ensuring the wellbeing of our constituents."

During their meeting, the members also discussed their shared values and goals. Sablan noted that this has been an ongoing conversation among the indepen-

dent members since before the election. "We all ran as independents, but we all recognized the importance of cooperating and supporting each other as a team to be effective," Sablan said. "And I look forward to working well together in the 21st Legislature because of the values and goals that we have in common, and because of the different strengths and experiences that each of us brings to the table."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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"We all ran as independents, but we all recognized the importance of cooperating and supporting each other as a team to be effective," Sablan said. "And I look forward to working well together in the 21st Legislature because of the values and goals that we have in common, and because of the different strengths and experiences that each of us brings to the table."

The members agreed that their group will be governed by three core values: trust, respect, and communication. They agreed to share information and engage regularly with constituents, through public forums, social media, news releases and position statements, and a periodic minority report. And while they agreed on the need for a strong, vigilant, and vocal minority to continually press for solutions to challenges like healthcare and education funding shortfalls, economic insecurity, environmental degradation, and weaknesses in government accountability, they also agreed to actively seek opportunities for bipartisan collaboration with incoming House Speaker B.J. Attao and the members of the majority.

Propst said he is grateful to be part of a "dynamic team" of leaders.

"Together we will introduce and promote good legislation that benefits our people," he said. "We will collaborate and assist each other in all precincts, pitching in to keep our community clean and beautiful."

Propst is entering his third term as representative. He has served on the House committees on Education; Health; Commerce and Tourism; and Federal and Foreign Affairs.

Prior to joining the Legislature, Propst worked in education and owned a photography business. He holds a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and lives in Dandan, Saipan with his wife, Daisy, and their four children. (PR)



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2019 CCA Board of Directors & GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the community, cancer survivors, friends, and supporters to its annual general membership meeting on Thursday, January 17, 2019 at 5:30 PM at the CCA conference room in Gualo Rai.

The agenda will include the president's 2018 annual report as well as the treasurer's financial report. Immediately after the representations, election of four (4) board members will commence. Nominations for board members will be accepted in advance via email and/or on the floor.

To submit a board nomination, or more information contact CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com

Judiciary hours

On Monday, Dec. 31, 2018, the CNMI Judiciary will be closed on Rota and Tinian. On the same dates, all offices on Saipan will be closed except for those assisting with preset hearings at the U.S. District

Court for the NMI and/or the Marianas Business Plaza.

Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019, New Year's Day, is a Commonwealth holiday and the Judiciary will be closed.

For more information or

assistance, contact Nora V. Borja, acting clerk of court, at the CNMI Supreme Court at 236-9715 or email her at nora.borja@justice.gov.mp; or contact Patrick V. Diaz, clerk of court, at the CNMI Superior Court at 236-9766 or email him at patrick.diaz@justice.gov.mp. (PR)



BANK OF GUAM DONATION

The Bank of Guam donates \$15,000 to Karidat Social Services' Super Typhoon Yutu long-term recovery mission. The bank has been an ardent supporter of Karidat throughout the years, and understands that the recovery from the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu will take months, if not years. Karidat executive director Lauri B. Ogomoro said that Bank of Guam similarly supported Karidat's mission after Typhoon Soudelor in 2015 and it is once again helping CNMI families rebuild their lives and homes after Super Typhoon Yutu. Ogomoro said that Karidat is grateful for the bank's support. "We know that there is a long road ahead but we are committed to the task ahead and working with our community partners. This donation from the Bank of Guam will go a long way."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-18-032

Supply, Installation and Commissioning of a 1.5 MW Trailer Mounted Diesel Generating Set with Enclosure for the CUC Power Plant No. 3, Saipan, CNMI

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the Supply, Installation and Commissioning of a 1.5 Mega Watt Trailer Mounted Diesel Generating Set with Enclosure for the CUC Power Plant No. 3 Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and plans for the project, will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and four (4) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format or USB Drive, must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-18-032, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of a 1.5 MW Trailer Mounted Diesel Generating Set with Enclosure for the CUC Power Plant No. 3, Saipan, CNMI"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than January 3, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors. All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: <https://marianalabor.net/>. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 14, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to yvonne.cabrera@cucgov.org, CUC-Power Generation Manager, Richard Cano via email address richard.cano@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Assistant via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-19-001

Repair of CUC Power Plant No. 2 Building Structure, Lower Base, Saipan, CNMI

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the Repair of CUC Power Plant No. 2 Building Structure, Saipan, Lower Base, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The work includes replacement of various building elements which were damaged due to the Typhoon Soudelor and also additional work required to strengthen the facility for improving its integrity with a view of withstanding elements of nature. CUC has performed partial work under an ongoing contract with another contractor.

This project is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from the above mentioned funding agencies.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **150 calendar days** from the date of issuance of the Notice to Proceed.

Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$150.00 for one RFP package set.

A Pre-proposal Conference will be scheduled on **December 18, 2018 at 10:00 am (ChST)**, at the power plant conference room, followed by a site visit. All attendees are required to arrive with appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). **The attendance in the conference and site visit is mandatory to ensure that the parties are fully familiar with the existing site conditions.**

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-19-001 - Repair of CUC Power Plant No. 2 Building Structure, Saipan, Lower Base, CNMI"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 4, 2019.** Late submissions and conditional Proposals will not be considered. Proposal shall be submitted on the provided Proposal Forms. Proposers are required to complete all Proposal Forms. Proposers may supplement the form as appropriate. Proposals will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 90 days after submission.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total Proposal price must accompany the Proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or Proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total Proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposers. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsive offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered Prospective Proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 19, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email - manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Venugopal Prabhakara, CUC Project Manager - via email venugopal.prabhakara@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Senior Purchasing Assistant via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and waive any imperfection in the Proposal in the best interest of the government. All Proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



During the month of October, you joined the movement to end Domestic Violence. Your partnership and support sent a clear message that violence has NO place in our Commonwealth. We salute YOU!

Thank you for embracing Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) as an opportunity to advocate for a safer home and community especially for our children. Ending the silence of domestic violence truly takes our collective voices. Although DVAM has ended, much remains to be done. We hope you will continue to speak out and empower others to do so.

We would like express our heartfelt thanks to survivors and their families for their extraordinary courage in facing each day and their unwavering hope that we can, as a community, break the cycle of violence.

Thank you also to the first responders, service providers, and advocates who continue to work diligently to serve victims, survivors, and their families. Last, but not least, the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence and the Family Violence Task Force express their sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the following volunteers, donors, and partners for the tremendous support during DVAM.



Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghilisow Reemi!

**Tan Siu Lin
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950**Jayvee L. Vallejera** EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com**Mark Rabago** ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

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EDITORIAL

A harsh plan for food stamps

The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, better known as food stamps, provides crucial financial aid to nearly 40 million impoverished Americans. The subsidy comes with strings attached, however, including the requirement that able-bodied adults work.

Last week, the Trump administration proposed to make that work requirement considerably more stringent. If it has its way, it will make life more miserable for some of the poorest Americans, many of whom are working already in low-paying, entry-level jobs.

Why the change? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the goal is to move more able-bodied SNAP recipients to self-sufficiency “through the dignity of work.”

“The rule is meant to restore the system to what it was meant to be: assistance through difficult times, not lifelong dependency,” the department said.

The department may claim a noble purpose, but the details of the proposal argue otherwise.

For starters, it's hard to see what problem the administration is trying to solve. As of the end of September, 38.6 million Americans were receiving food stamps, costing taxpayers \$5.8 billion. That's significantly fewer than the 43.7 million people who were on food stamps two years ago, and way, way down from the post-recession peak of nearly 48 million in 2013. What's more, the overwhelming majority of recipients are not able-bodied, working-age adults; rather, most recipients are children.

As we said up front, the program already has work requirements—and unless you meet them, you can't receive food stamps for more than three months over three years. To meet the existing requirements, recipients must work at least 20 hours a week or take part in an approved job training or workfare program. Under federal law, states are allowed to waive the work requirement if their unemployment rate is at least 10 percent or if jobs are “insufficient.”

The USDA argues that the unemployment rate is so low now that states could waive the work requirement even when less than 4.5 percent of their residents are jobless. But that ignores how difficult it may still be for certain groups within a state—adults without high-school diplomas or newly released inmates, for example—to find work. And the USDA offered no data to show why 7 percent is a better floor than, say, 5 percent or 10 percent.

Worse, threatening to cut off food stamps to people who don't meet the work requirements won't make it any easier for them to overcome the barriers they may face, such as the lack of job training programs in their states or the shortage of child care.

The issue here isn't a lack of appreciation for the “dignity of work,” it's a need for better skills and better jobs. The path out of poverty is grueling enough without help to put food on the table.

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Cheers!

Here's a quote attributed to Confucius, and it's a great notion to close out the year with: “Goody-goodies are the thieves of virtue.”

As for next year, perhaps this wisdom can be employed when penciling-out New Year resolutions. This time around, in fact, there's a medical study that might be of help. As reported in the U.S. media, a study by doctors at the University of California, Irvine, indicates that those who drink “moderate amounts” of alcohol or caffeine live longer than those who abstain.

See? Things are looking up already.

Whether imbibing these substances actually causes people to live longer, or is merely correlated with longevity, is not readily apparent.

Studies are often great conversation starters, and, as such, they can inspire us to think about things that deserve our attention.

But I don't usually get wound up about studies one way or the other. Offhand, I can't think of any particular study that convinced me to eat, or to not eat, or to drink, or to not drink, anything in particular. I have known people who, by contrast, are more enthusiastic about the study thing, some of whom have spent decades zig-zagging from one trend to another.

In fact, this introduces a line of inquiry worth pursuing. Has anyone studied the longevity of people who follow studies about longevity?

While we await the wisdom on that count, I'm going to hunker down in my beach chair. In order to be as useless as possible, I'm going to ponder things on an abstract plane.

Two types of studies that I've usually had to deal with are statistical studies (which look at data from a number of cases) and accident investigations (which look at data pertaining to one specific case). Both types seek to identify a relationship between a cause and an effect.

Our notion of cause-and-effect is based on very mechanical conception of relationships, just as our idea of logic is based on well-defined lattice of formal protocols. Of course, this makes sense in a lot of cases, but there can still be pitfalls if we're not careful.

The term “chain of events,” which is very common in accident investigations, sees various events as discrete elements like the

By ED STEPHENS JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at EdStephensJr.com.
His column runs every Friday.



physical links on a chain. But who is really to say when an event begins and when it ends? It's entirely subjective. I've seen a lot of so-called “events” that really began a day, or a year, or a decade before things were recognized as an “event.”

Furthermore, there is an infinite amount of factors that can potentially influence any given event (the “wings of a butterfly” factor), but only a handful of factors can be considered in a study. Since there's no way to objectively determine that all the excluded factors are of zero relevance, this facet of studies is yet another source of subjectivity.

This was, by the way, an inspiration behind the book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert Pirsig. As a chemistry student, Pirsig had realized that the cleanly scientific protocol of chemistry experiments had this subjective element. Pirsig changed course in order to pursue philosophy and to get a better handle on this subjective vs. objective conundrum. He found the West bereft of answers on this note. Fortunately, he had better luck when he consulted the Eastern wisdom.

Overall, looking back at the world of studies, I think it's sensible to apply a healthy dose of judgment whenever reviewing the “facts” of any study. But applying this judgment doesn't mean we have to go shooting off our mouths about it. In casual conversation it's common for people to introduce a notion with the validating decree, “studies show,” and I'm happy to purse my lips in a thoughtful manner, nod my head, and let them tell me what they want to tell me.

In the meantime, for the New Year I'm penciling in a little more money for the coffee budget and I will once again avoid being a goody-goody. I'm on safe ground this time around. It's what studies show.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Rebuilding after Yutu

It's a given the economy would dip from destruction of a superstorm. Most basic infrastructure here are totaled and would take time to rebuild. The physical damage has adversely affected even the normal conduct of business here. Yet we have begun rebuilding in earnest. With resilience we should return to normalcy soon.

It is rumored that shipment of CUC-ordered materials might be delayed out of California. Remember the golden state recently dealt with humongous forest fire that destroyed a lot of homes. It's also rebuilding!

Meanwhile, it means far more for far less and must diligently guard how we spend scarce fiscal resources. Any shift or change is hard so you could imagine rebuilding revenue losses.

Businesses need time to rebuild before rebounding. Despite the hardship let's look forward with a sense of optimism.

Our thanks to FEMA, the military and other organizations that helped immediately after the storm, passing water and food in the villages. *Si yuus maase'!*

■■■

Sunset: Sailing into the sunset highlights the grand golden glow reflected in the silvery waters around the lagoon. Instantly, you are engulfed in that majestic dome-like setting, humbled by the sheer beauty of paradise even as an islander.

It's a picturesque scene from shore, reef, and beyond. I've watched the sunset spread its tentacles far and wide while fishing in the lagoon. Love the Beach Road drive when the golden glow leaves to break another dawn across the sea.

Yes, we take our sunset for granted. This is because we see it throughout the course of the year. But if you live in Texas or Tokyo, you get an appreciation of our colorful sunset while rain-bow chases rain-forming clouds at a distance.

Take a picture of it and send it to friends across the country. You'd be surprised at their reaction and likely ask for an enlarged version to place in their living room.

I've seen a lot of Nippon visitors taking photo snaps of the lovely sunset, giggling and comparing who captured the best. It was our visitors who found our beautiful golden sunset a real feature of the island. Evidently, have you seen the sunset?

■■■

Shore: The vast lagoon runs the entire stretch of the shoreline on the western side of the island. It's good fishing and playground for locals and visitors alike.

Fishermen fish for family dietary needs while visitors have water sports activities that keep them gathering prestigious suntan.

■■■

Luff: I was looking for the mayor on one of the islands for a casual visit. The secretary related that he's out on "luff land," learning a new theme song.

No surprise that folks around town have heard the mayors rehearsing their rendition of *For Me and My Gal*, dwarfing music greats like Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra. Said Magoo, "Eh, with a young catch I'd do it right or she'd be looking for another

By **JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

mayor!" Mayor who?

■■■

Tinian: We know that our brothers and sisters on Tinian had to endure the brutal destruction of Yutu. A lot of homes were destroyed, including farms and businesses and had to begin anew.

Powerful storms are especially hard on islanders who farm for a living. Hoping too that local and federal agencies have extended a helping hand so they could get back on their feet.

The destruction itself takes a lot of work to clear, clean, and prepare for another round of planting. Most should ably regain their tracks in about six months to a year's time.

Small: I've been to many countries near and far and counties across the fruited plain. I've visited small farm and island communities where folks share and care for one another unlike huge cities.

It's the close-knit relationship that is most appealing and how they come together as a community when something needs to be done. It's the culture of help and share that stands out prominently. It's an indelible part of our island culture, too.

I've seen it all over island nations in the Pacific. It's most admirable how folks voluntarily pitch-in. It's a hallmark of small communities all over where unity and generosity are a way of life.

■■■

A belated *felis noche buena* to one and all! Si JR & family!

All I Got for Christmas was a Colonoscopy

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and has been named a poet laureate of Tinian. He has taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

On the day before Christmas fortune gave to me a present you may find quite difficult to believe I was scheduled for surgery, my third colonoscopy to be completed on the morn of Christmas Eve.

Instead of down the chimney Santa's helper is going up the drain pipe to check maybe cut some polyps where all that funky waste matter has been flowing a place dark as the night of a total lunar eclipse.

Oh boy what a present! guess its what I needed it won't be Santa himself but done by young Dr. Chen to his sage advice I paid attention and I heeded hoped for mercy of Buddha and the wisdom of Zen.

Hope this tale of my tail didn't make you heave it really happened to me on last Christmas Eve.

'Twas A Politically Correct Lonely Night

'Twas the night before a politically correct 'happy holiday' and all through the Trumpy Dumpty White House a lonely, childish, bully, narcissist was Tweeting both thumbs moving no need for a wireless mouse his base was dwindling most were quite disappointed with Trump's favorite TV channel and stories on FOX Democratic candidates had Republicans disoriented in a blue wave that emerged out of a populist box last election's losers weren't showing up to work the stock market was heading in a downward trend all going over the head of the bigly lying jerk who will close down government if Dems don't spend twas a bleak holiday season and all over the TVs trials and sentencing for Manafort and 2 Mikees and what to those glued to their cell phones did appear but investigations from all sides leaving 45 in fear.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



The Lady Diann Torres Foundation is one of the supporters of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JKPL says thank you






This past week, Dec. 18-22, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library celebrated its 27th anniversary as well as the holidays with a multitude of fun activities! The library would like to extend a huge thank you to all our sponsors, community partners, and volunteers who made this week possible: the Joeten and Kiyu families, Office of the Governor, the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, NMC CREES Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, the Lady Diann Torres Foundation, Saipan Community School, biologist Trey Dunn and the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Meena Benavente, Commonwealth Library Council, Department of Public Safety Carolers, Leni Leon, CNMI Motherhead/Fatheread Family Literacy Program, and Northern Marianas Humanities Council. Thank you for helping make our celebration possible!

During the week, we had many successful programs, such as a cookie decorating contest, movie days, crafts, a hot chocolate bar, a Christmas ukulele concert, a gift-wrapping station and more! The public was invited to share in the festivities with a birthday celebration—including cake and hot chocolate, as well as the viewing of photographer Leni Leon's stunning photos of the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu (the gallery is currently on display in the library's main lobby).

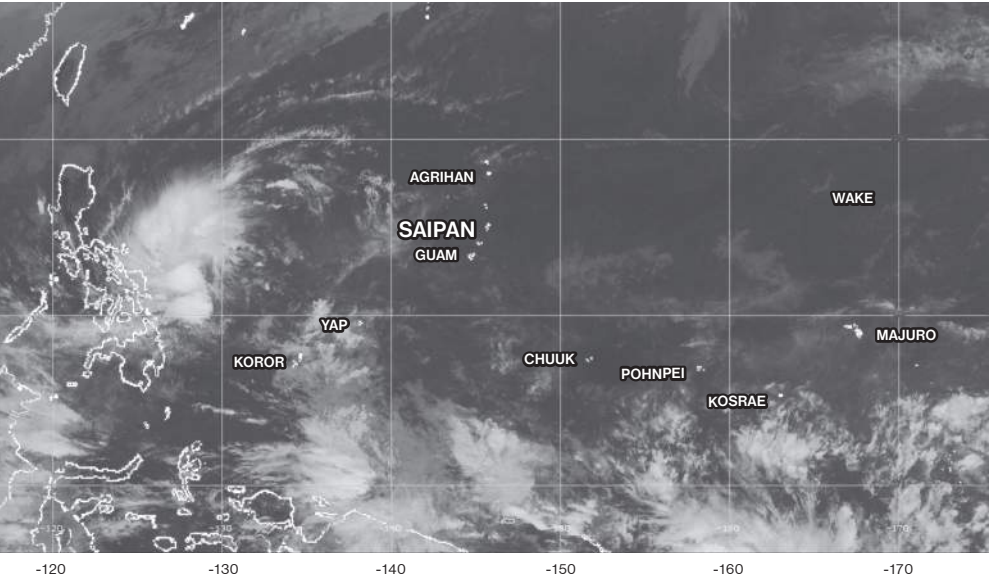
The library also hosted a mini-exhibit to promote some of our community partners: the Northern Marianas Humanities Council, NMC CREES Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, the Lady Diann Torres Foundation, and Leni Leon. We appreciate the time and effort to help us celebrate and inform the community about your crucial services!

For the latest news and events, please visit the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's website at www.cnmlib.org and like and/or follow JKPL's Facebook page, @joetenkiyu. Follow the library on Instagram @joetenkiyu and Pinterest @ Joeten Kiyu. Questions? Call (670) 235-READ.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	
89°	78°	89°	78°	88°	77°	88°	77°	88°	77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									
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PICTURE TIME: 7:34 AM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Only a few tweaks made to the forecast. This morning’s radar showed only a few trade-wind showers over the Marianas. Models keep the weather relatively dry through at least the weekend with only isolated showers expected. Did add some clouds on Friday as models do hint at a brief period of clouds. The mostly cloudy conditions will probably be caused by the weak Hedgehog...trade-wind disturbance east of 150E. Models continue to show what looks like a shear line passing over the Marianas on Monday night through Tuesday night. It appears weak in the models and 700 mb RH remains low so shower coverage is expected to remain isolated.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA ▲ ▼ °F		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Majuro	Showers	86° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE ▲ ▼ °F		
Auckland	Rain	72° / 61°
Beijing	Sunny	30° / 7°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	63° / 52°
Honolulu	Thunderstorms	80° / 69°
London	Partly Cloudy	46° / 37°
Los Angeles	Sunny	63° / 43°
Manila	Rain	81° / 75°
Melbourne	Cloudy	79° / 64°
Miami	Thunderstorms	79° / 75°
New York	Rain	57° / 49°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	45° / 36°
Paris	Showers	41° / 37°
Busan	Windy	37° / 21°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	55° / 39°
Salem	Thunderstorms	67° / 55°
San Francisco	Sunny	55° / 43°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	39° / 19°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	45° / 32°
Washington, DC	Rain	61° / 49°



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
5:51 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.18
12:54 PM	HIGH TIDE	2.02
7:07 PM	LOW TIDE	0.92
11:49 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.56

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Saturday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Sunday	6:42 AM	5:56 PM
Monday	6:42 AM	5:57 PM
Tuesday	6:42 AM	5:57 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	11:25 AM	11:36 PM
Saturday	-	12:09 AM	-
Sunday	12:31 AM	12:52 PM	-
Monday	1:24 AM	1:34 PM	-
Tuesday	2:17 AM	2:16 PM	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4	UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:				TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:			
TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4	TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily	TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2				
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5	TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily	TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
				TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
				7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U86486:10am		8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)				HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1	JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4	JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6	3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7	MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM	UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7	PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
via GUM							
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via	UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
GUM-ROR							
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN				
U043	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7	HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM	U042	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
				U042	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM	UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
				UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily

1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

A strong economy translates into big sales this holiday

NEW YORK (AP)—Americans buoyed by a strong economy pushed holiday sales growth to a six-year high.

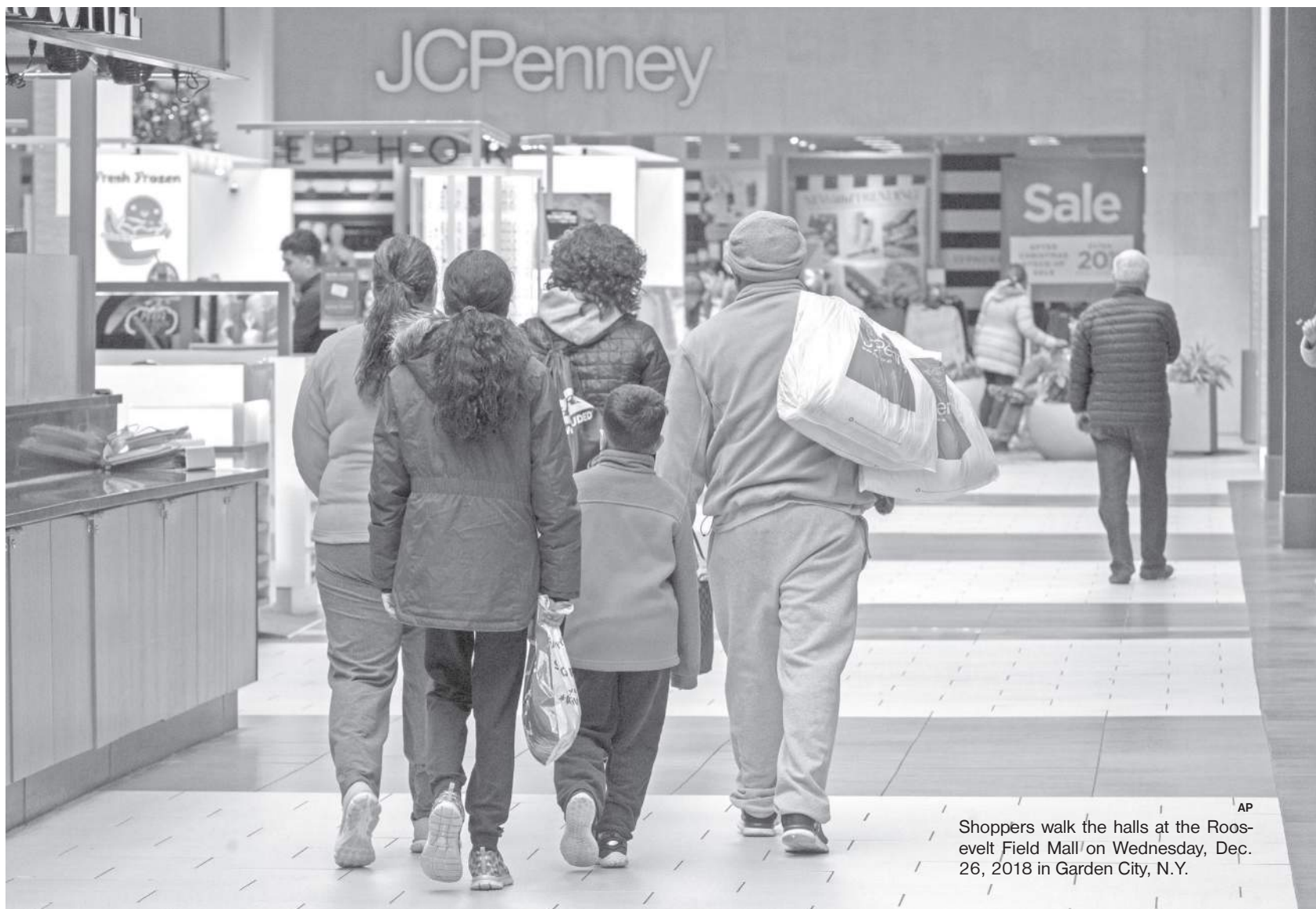
Retail sales rose 5.1 percent between Nov. 1 and Dec. 24 from a year ago, according to Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracked spending online and in stores across all payment types, including those who paid by cash or check. Total sales topped \$850 billion this year, Mastercard said.

“From shopping aisles to online carts, consumer confidence translated into holiday cheer for retail,” said Steve Sadove, a senior adviser at Mastercard and the former CEO of the department store chain Saks.

Online sales continued to grow, up more than 19 percent from a year ago. Last week, Mastercard said online sales made up 13 percent of total retail sales.

Clothing sold well this year -- up nearly 8 percent from last year, the biggest growth for apparel sales since 2010, Mastercard said. Home furniture sales rose 2.3 percent, while electronics and appliances slipped 0.7 percent.

Shoppers spent less at department stores, which



Shoppers walk the halls at the Roosevelt Field Mall on Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2018 in Garden City, N.Y. AP

Maui's foam takeout-container ban takes effect at year's end

WAILUKU, Hawaii (AP)—A Maui County law banning a common way of serving up popular plate lunches takes effect at the end of the year.

Maui is the first Hawaii county to ban polystyrene foam containers. The ban takes effect on the Big Island on July 1.

Starting Dec. 31, Maui businesses won't be allowed to use or sell foam food containers, including hinged clamshell containers, plates, bowls and cups. Polystyrene food containers still may be used for raw or butchered meats, poultry, fish or eggs—food that needs further preparation to eat, according to the county.

Supporters have said the measure will reduce pollution. Opponents have said small businesses and consumers will face higher costs for biodegradable containers.

County officials have been sending informational packets to businesses and attending public hearings, The Maui News reported. An estimated 2,000 businesses will be affected by

the new law, said Tamara Farnsworth of the county's Department of Environmental Management.

“Enacting this type of legislation is an action we can take at a local level to combat the huge issue of plastics in the environment, and in particular, for us living in island communities,” said Farnsworth, manager of the department's Environmental Protection and Sustainability Division. “It's important to keep in mind that plastics never go away; they break down into smaller bits but do not degrade for hundreds of years.”

Consumers should consider these consequences when making purchasing decisions, she said.

Local Boys Shave Ice and Pharmacy Health Bar owner Christopher “Malik” Cousins stopped using foam cups 10 years ago when he saw one of his cups blow past him at the landfill.

“It was from years before,” he said of the cup. He raised prices by 10 cents or 15 cents when he switched to compostable cups, and “nobody noticed,” he said.

Mastercard said was partly due to store closings. But shoppers did head to the

websites of department stores, where sales rose 10.2 percent, Mastercard said.

Traditional retailers have been updating their websites and smartphone apps, as well

as making it easier for shoppers to buy online and then pick up their items in store.

Indian casinos across US wary of betting on sports books

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Two dozen large-screen TVs showing football and other sports line the walls. There's beer on tap, bar top seating and leather chairs. Chicken wings are on the menu. And at this American Indian casino in the heart of college-football mad Mississippi, you can legally bet on the games.

The sports book owned by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians is the first to open on tribal lands outside of Nevada following a U.S. Supreme Court ruling earlier this year, a no-brainer business decision given the sports fans among its gambling clientele.

“We are basically two hours from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and then, we are just an hour from Mississippi State. We have Ole Miss just to the north of that, and we have Southern Miss—they're not SEC, but they are a player. We are not that far from Louisiana,” said Neal Atkinson, the tribe's director of gaming.

The book at Pearl River Resort is packed every college football Saturday, but remains an outlier months after the high court opened the door for expanded sports gambling

across the United States by striking down a federal ban.

Tribes enthusiastically welcomed the decision in May but since then, the regulatory challenges and low-margin nature of the business have sunk in. Few Indian casinos have an enviable location like the Choctaw and many need state approval to add sports betting to their offerings.

Indian casinos started small three decades ago, but they have grown to be an annual \$32.4 billion segment of the U.S. gambling industry. The roughly 475 casinos operated by nearly 240 tribes create jobs for tribal members and profits that help pay a variety of services, including health care and housing.

Some casinos only have games like bingo or pull tabs that don't need state approval. But the majority of them also have state-authorized slot machines, blackjack and other table games, according to the National Indian Gaming Commission.

Many tribes share a portion of casino profits with state governments in exchange for exclusive rights to conduct gambling operations within

their states.

To offer sports betting, the majority of tribes would have to renegotiate compacts that vary widely in cycles and the issues covered, though some tribes believe their existing agreements already give them the right to offer the new wagers.

“There's a broad spectrum in Indian Country covering two extremes: Tribal nations that would not benefit at all, and on the other end, tribal nations that would significantly benefit,” commission chairman Jonodev Osceola Chaudhuri said. “Those are largely business decisions that each tribe will have to make given its own economic landscape and its unique market realities.”

Some federal lawmakers have also proposed regulating sports gambling more widely, adding yet another layer to a complex debate already involving commercial casinos and lotteries, plus sports leagues themselves.

So far, only the Santa Ana Pueblo near Albuquerque, New Mexico, has followed the Choctaw's effort into sports gambling. Neither tribe was

required to obtain additional state approvals.

Contrary to popular belief, sports betting is a low-profit business that requires highly skilled employees. In Nevada, sportsbooks last year contributed only 2.4 percent of the gambling revenue of casinos statewide—dwarfed by the proceeds from table games and slots. The limited payoff has tribal casinos balancing the allure of a Las Vegas-style amenity with the risks of opening compacts for negotiations.

“Tribal leadership is extremely protective of what they have because it's meant so much to us, and there's always a risk of upsetting the apple cart,” Washington State Gambling Commission member Chris Stearns said. “Is this going to help us? Is this going to hurt us? That's really at the heart of why you see Indian tribes gently venturing into sports betting. ... In a lot of states, tribes write a check out to the state in exchange for exclusivity. So, any time there's a new gambling product, and you ask the state to authorize it, there is a risk the state will say ‘Sure, but it is going to cost you.’”

Nation

Deaths of 2 children raise doubts about US border agency

HOUSTON (AP)—The deaths of two migrant children in just over two weeks raised strong new doubts Wednesday about the ability of U.S. border authorities to care for the thousands of minors arriving as part of a surge of families trying to enter the country.

An 8-year-old boy identified by Guatemalan officials as Felipe Gomez Alonzo died in U.S. custody at a New Mexico hospital on Christmas Eve after suffering a cough, vomiting and fever, authorities said.

The cause is under investigation, as is the death Dec. 8 of another Guatemalan child, 7-year-old Jakelin Caal.

“There is a real failure here that we all need to reckon with,” said incoming Rep. Veronica Escobar, a Democrat elected last month to represent El Paso in Congress. “We need to know how many other Jakelins and Felipes there have been.”

The U.S. government’s system for detaining migrants crossing the border is severely

overtaxed. Authorities would not say how many children U.S. Customs and Border Protection is now holding. But the country is seeing a sharp rise in families with children.

In the wake of the two deaths, Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen asked the Coast Guard to study CBP’s medical programs and announced that all children who enter the agency’s custody will be given “more thorough” assessments.

Also, border authorities said

that they conducted health checks in reaction to Felipe’s death on nearly all children in their custody. They did not disclose the results.

Nielsen blamed “a system that prevents parents who bring their children on a dangerous illegal journey from facing consequences for their actions.” The Trump administration contends it must detain more people to discourage other Central American families from trying to enter the country.

Felipe had been detained by U.S. border authorities for a week and moved between facilities with his father, officials said. The last place the boy was held—after the first of two visits to the hospital on the day he died—was a highway checkpoint in New Mexico.

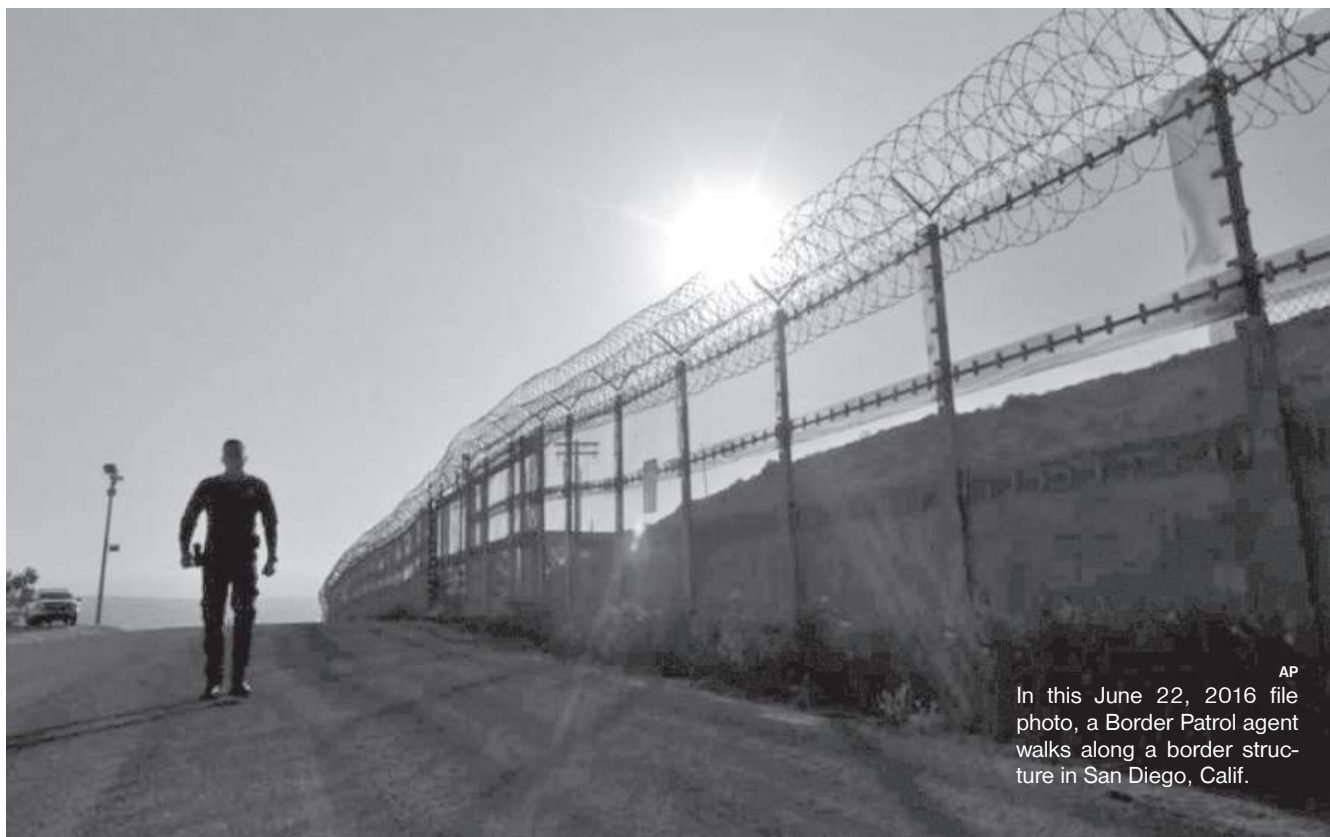
Felipe’s father, Agustin Gomez, did not see any signs of illness from his son until Monday, according to Guatemalan consul Oscar Padilla, who spoke to Gomez on Wednesday. Felipe and his father had left Guatemala on Dec. 14 and were detained at the U.S.-Mexico border four days later, Padilla told The Associated Press.

By its own regulations, CBP is supposed to detain people for no more than 72 hours before turning them over to other

government agencies responsible for long-term detention. CBP facilities are typically spartan, with food, water and blankets but often no medical professionals, teachers or some of the other resources longer-term detention centers offer.

Similarly, Jakelin was first held with her father at a small base in rural New Mexico that did not have running water, according to Democrats who visited it after the girl’s death.

Rep. Henry Cuellar, a Texas Democrat who sits on a key subcommittee overseeing border funding, said he has pushed to fund more alternatives to detention such as ankle monitors, which he said could have been issued to Felipe’s father.



AP
In this June 22, 2016 file photo, a Border Patrol agent walks along a border structure in San Diego, Calif.

ACROSS THE NATION

Team to skip events with ref who told wrestler to cut dreads

BUENA, N.J. (AP)—A New Jersey school district says its wrestling team will no longer compete in events officiated by a referee who told a wrestler to lose his dreadlocks or forfeit his bout. The announcement came during an emergency meeting held Wednesday with the Buena Regional school board and members of the community. The groups that assign referees have already said they wouldn’t assign the ref until further notice. Buena Regional High School wrestler Andrew Johnson had his dreadlocks cut minutes before the match Dec. 19. Johnson, who is black, had a cover over his hair, but referee Alan Maloney, who is white, said that wouldn’t do. Maloney didn’t respond to requests for comment. WCAU-TV reports the high school’s wrestling coach and athletic trainer discussed the incident with board members behind closed doors Wednesday.

4 killed when car, tanker collide on New Jersey highway

TOMS RIVER, N.J. (AP)—New Jersey state police say four people are dead after a crash involving a car and a tanker truck on the Garden State Parkway. The accident was reported around 2:50 a.m. Wednesday in the southbound lanes near mile marker 81.5 in Toms River. State police say the car driven by 21-year-old Kevin Quispe-Prieto, of Beachwood, slammed into the

back of the tanker. Quispe-Prieto and three passengers—Jimmy Quispe-Prieto and Robert Ordenana, both 23, and 24-year-old Victor Lugo, all of Lakewood—were pronounced dead at the scene. Authorities haven’t said whether any of the four victims were related. It’s not clear if the tanker was moving at the time. The tanker driver suffered minor injuries. The cause of the crash remains under investigation. Authorities shut down some lanes as they investigated the crash, causing travel delays in the area.

Joyrider steals New York City bus, goes undetected for hours

NEW YORK (AP)—Authorities say a joyrider sneaked off with an empty New York City bus and took it on an hourslong adventure from the Bronx to Queens and back. Police said Wednesday they’re searching for a suspect in Sunday’s brazen heist, which was starting to gain attention after the Christmas holiday. Police said the bus was stolen around 7:40 p.m. Sunday near the Crossings Mall in the Bronx. GPS data shows it went to Queens before it was found a few blocks from where it was originally parked around 4 a.m. Monday, more than eight hours later. Police say the public agency that operates city transit didn’t report the bus stolen until after it was already found. The agency, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, declined to comment, citing the ongoing police investigation.

American man first to solo across Antarctica unaided

An Oregon man became the first person to traverse Antarctica alone without any assistance on Wednesday, trekking across the polar continent in an epic 54-day journey that was previously deemed impossible.

Colin O’Brady, of Portland, finished the bone-chilling, 930-mile (1,500-kilometer) journey as friends, family and fans tracked the endurance athlete’s progress in real time online.

“I did it!” a tearful Brady said on a call to his family gathered in Portland for the holidays, according to his wife, Jenna Besaw.

“It was an emotional call,” she said. “He seemed overwhelmed by love and gratitude, and he really wanted to say ‘Thank you’ to all of us.”

O’Brady was sleeping near the finish line in Antarctica late Wednesday and could not immediately be reached for comment.

The 33-year-old O’Brady documented his nearly entirely uphill journey—which he called The Impossible First—on his Instagram page. He

wrote Wednesday that he covered the last roughly 80 miles (129 kilometers) in one big, impromptu final push to the finish line that took well over an entire day.

“While the last 32 hours were some of the most challenging hours of my life, they have quite honestly been some of the best moments I have ever experienced,” O’Brady posted.

The day before, he posted that he was “in the zone” and thought he could make it to the end in one go.

“I’m listening to my body and taking care of the details to keep myself safe,” he wrote. “I called home and talked to my mom, sister and wife—I promised them I will stop when I need to.”

Though others have traversed Antarctica, they either had assistance with reinforced supplies or kites that helped propel them forward.

In 2016, British explorer Henry Worsley died attempting an unassisted solo trip across Antarctica, collapsing from exhaustion toward

the end of the trek. Worsley’s friend and fellow English adventurer Louis Rudd is currently attempting an unaided solo in Worsley’s honor and was competing against O’Brady to be the first to do it.

Besaw said O’Brady plans to stay on Antarctica until Rudd finishes his trek, hopefully in the next few days.

“It’s a small club,” she joked. “His intention is to wait for Louis and have kind of a celebratory moment with the only other person on the planet to have accomplished this same thing.”

O’Brady described in detail the ups and downs along the way since he began the trek on Nov. 3. He had to haul 375 pounds (170 kilograms) of gear largely uphill and over sastrugi, wave-like ridges created by wind.

“Not only am I pulling my ... sled all day, but I’m pulling it up and over thousands of these sastrugi speed bumps created by the violent wind,” he wrote in an Instagram post on Nov. 12. “It’s a frustrating process at times to say the least.”

On Nov. 18, he wrote that

he awoke to find his sled completely buried from an all-night blasting of wind and snow. That day he battled a 30 mph (48 kph) headwind for eight hours as he trudged along.

“There were several times I considered stopping, putting my tent back up and calling it a day,” he wrote. “I wanted so badly to quit today as I was feeling exhausted and alone, but remembering all of the positivity that so many people have been sending, I took a deep breath and focused on maintaining forward progress one step at a time and managed to finish a full day.”

On Day 37, or Dec. 9, O’Brady wrote about how much he’s changed, along with a selfie in which he looks almost in pain, snow gathered around his furry hat.

“I’m no longer the same person I was when I left on the journey, can you see it in my face?” he wrote. “I’ve suffered, been deathly afraid, cold and alone. I’ve laughed and danced, cried tears of joy and been awestruck with love and inspiration.”

Asia

North Korea ordered to pay parents, estate of student \$500M

WASHINGTON (AP)—A federal judge ordered North Korea to pay more than \$500 million in a wrongful death suit filed by the parents of Otto Warmbier, an American college student who died shortly after being released from that country.

U.S. District Judge Beryl Howell harshly condemned North Korea for “barbaric mistreatment” of Warmbier in agreeing Monday with his family that the isolated nation should be held liable for his death last year. She awarded punitive damages and payments covering medical expenses, economic loss and pain and suffering to Fred and Cindy Warmbier, who alleged that their son had been held hostage and tortured.

Warmbier was a University of Virginia student who was visiting North Korea with a tour group when he was arrested and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor in March 2016 on suspicion of stealing a propaganda poster. He died in June 2017, shortly after he returned to the U.S. in a coma and showing apparent signs of torture while in custody.

In holding North Korea responsible, Howell said the government had seized Warmbier for “use as a pawn in that totalitarian state’s global shenanigans and face-off with the United States.”

“Before Otto traveled with a tour group on a five-day trip to North Korea, he was a healthy, athletic student of economics and business in his junior year at the University of Virginia, with ‘big dreams’ and both the smarts and people skills to make him his high school



class salutatorian, homecoming king, and prom king,” the judge wrote. “He was blind, deaf, and brain dead when North Korea turned him over to U.S. government officials for his final trip home.”

The arrest and death of Warmbier came during a time of heightened tension between the U.S. and North Korea over the country’s nuclear weapons program. President Donald Trump held a first-of-its-kind summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in June 2018 and plans another next year.

The judgment may be mostly a symbolic victory since North Korea has yet to respond to any of the allegations in court and there’s no practical mechanism to force it to do so. But the family may nonetheless be able to recoup damages through a Justice Department-administered fund for victims of state-sponsored acts of terrorism, and may look to seize other assets held by the country outside of North Korea.

Fred and Cindy Warmbier, who are from a suburb of Cincinnati, said they were thank-

ful the court found the government of Kim Jong Un “legally and morally” responsible for their son’s death.

“We put ourselves and our family through the ordeal of

a lawsuit and public trial because we promised Otto that we will never rest until we have justice for him,” they said in a statement. “Today’s thoughtful opinion by Chief

Pakistan’s journalists complain of increasing censorship

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistani journalists, who have taken on military dictators and been beaten and jailed in the pursuit of a free press, say they now face a form of censorship that is more subtle but no less chilling, one spearheaded by the security services.

Journalists and press freedom advocates say the military and the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence agency, or ISI, are pressuring media outlets to quash critical coverage. The newly elected government is meanwhile slashing its advertising budget, squeezing a key source of revenue for private newspapers and TV stations.

Ghazi Salaudin, a veteran Pakistani journalist who has witnessed successive periods of direct military rule, said today’s censorship is the worst it’s ever been.

“Today we don’t know what will annoy them,” he said of the military. “Today we have to do self-censorship and that is the worst kind of censorship, because it is done out of fear.”

Websites have been shut down, including the Urdu website of the U.S. government-funded Voice of America, after it reported on a tribal movement critical of military

operations in regions bordering Afghanistan. Mashaal Radio, affiliated with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, has also been shut down.

Journalist Cyril Almeida was charged with treason after he published an interview with Nawaz Sharif in which the former prime minister accused the Pakistani military of aiding the militants who carried out the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Authorities are also targeting social media, asking Twitter to suspend accounts and submitting thousands of requests to Facebook to take down pages for a variety of reasons, ranging from criticism of the military to propagating hate and insulting Islam.

Taha Siddiqui, an opinion writer and journalist who is critical of the security services, lives in self-imposed exile in France after an attempt on his life earlier this year, which he blamed on the ISI. He said Twitter suspended his account twice in 72 hours, telling him it was because of “objectionable content that was in violation of Pakistani law,” without elaborating.

Journalist Matiullah Jan, labeled “anti-state” by the military for his criticism of the judiciary

AP
American student Otto Warmbier, center, is escorted at the Supreme Court in Pyongyang, North Korea, on March 16, 2016.

Judge Howell is a significant step on our journey.”

The lawsuit, filed in April, describes in horrific detail the physical abuse Warmbier endured in North Korean custody, recounting how his parents were “stunned to see his condition” when they boarded a plane to see him upon arrival in the U.S.

The 22-year-old was blind and deaf, his arms were curled and mangled and he was jerking violently and howling, completely unresponsive to his family’s attempts to comfort him. His once straight teeth were misaligned, and he had an unexplained scar on his foot. An expert said the injuries suggested he’d been tortured with electric shock, and a neurologist later concluded that the college student suffered brain damage, probably from a loss of blood flow to the brain for five to 20 minutes.

North Korea has denied Warmbier was tortured and has said he contracted botulism, though medical experts said there was no evidence of that.

and army, called the crackdown “a systematic attempt by the military and its intelligence agency to assert control with a facade of a democratically elected government.”

New legislation regulating print and online media has also alarmed press freedom advocates, who fear it will grant authorities even more censorship tools.

Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry denies the government is cracking down on press freedoms, saying it only acts to prevent incitement to violence. Pakistan has banned coverage of the hard-line Tehreek-e-Labbaik movement after it held violent protests and threatened to kill a Christian woman who was acquitted of blasphemy charges after years spent on death row. Blasphemy is punishable by death in Pakistan, and the mere accusation can spark deadly mob violence.

“Pakistan has the freest media possible, and powerful media criticize the government and even agencies and (the) army establishment at their will,” Chaudhry told The Associated Press. “Incitement of hatred is the only area that we interfere.”

ASIAN BRIEFS

Indonesia widens exclusion zone around island volcano

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia has widened the no-go zone around an island volcano that triggered a tsunami on the weekend, killing at least 430 people in Sumatra and Java. The country’s volcanology agency said Thursday that the Anak Krakatau volcano’s alert status had been raised to the second highest level and the exclusion zone more than doubled to a 5-kilometer (3-mile) radius. The eruption on Saturday evening caused part of the island in the Sunda Strait to collapse into the sea, apparently generating tsunami waves of more than 2 meters (6 1/2 feet). The government has warned Sunda Strait communities to stay a kilometer (less than a mile) away from the coastline because of the risk of another tsunami.

Body of missing toddler found in Thai sugarcane plantation

BANGKOK (AP)—The search for a missing 2-year-old boy in which even elephants were employed ended grimly Tuesday with the discovery of the toddler’s body in a sugarcane

plantation in central Thailand. Suphan Buri provincial governor Nimit Wanchaithanawong said the boy’s body was found around five kilometers (three miles) from where he was last seen, and officials are collecting evidence to determine his cause of death. Sului Piew, the son of migrant workers from Myanmar, went missing Dec. 17 when he went out to play near the plantation where his parents work. Hundreds of rescuers combed through an 80-acre (32-hectare) field of 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) sugarcane plants to search for the child, whose body was finally discovered near a small irrigation stream on the plantation. Police Col. Ronakorn Prakongsri told television station ThaiPBS that Sului’s body was found with injuries on his legs but he added that officers would wait for an autopsy report before they pursued investigating the point. Governor Nimit said the missing boy’s family had informed authorities of his disappearance when his 3-year-old friend told her parents that she saw Sului being abducted. The search for Sului, which officially began Dec. 19, involved hundreds of people including scuba divers, dogs and four elephants with their trainers riding them.

World

Israeli official confirms Syria airstrikes as Russia objects

JERUSALEM (AP)—An Israeli security official on Wednesday confirmed responsibility for overnight airstrikes in Syria, saying the air force had hit a series of targets involved in Iranian arms transfers to the Hezbollah militant group.

Russia had criticized the airstrike, saying it endangered civilian flights. The comments highlighted the increasingly tense relations between Israel and Russia, which have grown strained since the September downing of a Russian plane by Syrian forces responding to another Israeli raid.

The Israeli official said the air force had attacked several Iranian targets in three main locations late Tuesday and early Wednesday. He said the targets were primarily storage and logistics facilities used by archenemy Iran to ship weapons to Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed Lebanese group that fought Israel in a 2006 war.

He said Israel also destroyed a Syrian anti-aircraft battery that fired at the Israeli planes, and claimed that Iranian forces are operating less than 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the Israeli border, contrary to Russian assurances.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity under standard Israeli security protocols. The military has not com-



This frame grab from a video provided by the Syrian official news agency SANA shows missiles flying into the sky near Damascus, Syria, Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2018.

mented on the incident.

Earlier Wednesday, Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said that six Israeli F-16 jets launched a “provocative” raid at the moment when two civilian airliners were preparing to land in Damascus and Beirut, creating a “direct threat” to the aircraft.

Lebanon’s acting Transport Minister Youssef Fenianos later on Wednesday confirmed Konashenkov’s account, saying the two airplanes in Lebanese airspace “narrowly” escaped Israeli warplanes, averting a “human catastrophe.”

Fenianos said the Lebanese government will present a

complaint to the U.N. Security Council.

The Syrian military didn’t fully engage its air defense assets to avoid accidentally hitting the passenger jets, Konashenkov said. He added that Syrian air traffic controllers redirected the Damascus-bound plane to a Russian air base in Syria’s coastal province of Latakia.

Konashenkov said the Syrian air defense forces shot down 14 of the 16 precision-guided bombs dropped by the Israeli jets, while the remaining two hit a Syrian military

depot 7 kilometers (about 4 miles) west of Damascus, injuring three Syrian soldiers.

But the Israeli official said all targets had been hit, in some cases causing secondary explosions. He said errant Syrian anti-aircraft fire had endangered the civilian flights.

In recent years, Israel has acknowledged carrying out scores of airstrikes in neighboring Syria, most believed to have been aimed at suspected Iranian arms shipments to Hezbollah. Iran and Hezbollah have sent forces to Syria to bolster President Bashar

Assad, who appears close to victory after a devastating seven-year civil war.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly said Israel will not allow Iran to establish a permanent military presence in postwar Syria.

That mission has been complicated by the Sept. 17 downing of the Russian reconnaissance aircraft by Syrian fire. Russia, which also backs Assad, has blamed Israel for the friendly-fire mishap and reportedly scaled back a hotline that allowed the two air forces to coordinate and avoid unintended clashes.

Quake from Mount Etna volcano jolts Sicily, sparks panic

ROME (AP)—An earthquake triggered by Mount Etna’s eruption jolted eastern Sicily before dawn Wednesday, injuring at least 10 people, damaging churches and houses on the volcano’s slopes and prompting panicked villagers to flee their homes.

Italy’s Civil Protection officials said the quake, which struck at 3:19 a.m., was part of a swarm of some 1,000 tremors, most of them barely perceptible, linked to Etna’s volcanic eruption this week.

Italy’s national seismology institute said the quake had a magnitude of 4.8 on the open-ended Richter scale and 4.9 on the moment magnitude scale, which relates to the amount the ground slips. It struck north of Catania, the largest city in the eastern part of the Mediterranean island, but no damage or injuries were reported there.

The quake opened up cracks in homes in several towns, sending chunks of concrete debris tumbling to the ground. It toppled a Madonna statue in a church in Santa Venerina and broke up sidewalks and a stretch of highway, forcing it to close. Many people

spent the hours after the quake sleeping in their cars.

In the town of Piano d’Api, firefighters removed cracked stucco from the bell tower of the damaged Santa Maria della Misericordia church. Italy’s culture ministry said the quake damage to churches was being tallied by experts.

“Etna remains a dangerous volcano, and this country of ours is unfortunately fragile,” government undersecretary Vito Crimi said as he reported 10 people injured.

The most seriously injured was a 70-year-old man who fractured ribs and was undergoing surgery for chest injuries. A 71-year-old patient was being kept in hospital for observation, while others were treated and released, the Italian news agency ANSA reported. Additionally, 18 other people went to local hospitals suffering from panic attacks or shock, news reports said.

One 80-year-old man was safely extracted from the rubble of his home, ANSA said, while a woman told state radio that her sister was pulled out from under a heavy armoire that had toppled. A ceiling collapsed in another house, and in

other homes parts of exterior walls crumbled. Some stone walls along fields and local roads crumbled.

Etna, the largest of Italy’s three active volcanoes, has been particularly active since July. In recent days, Etna’s latest eruption has been shooting volcanic ash, heavy smoke and lava stones into the air, coating roads and homes nearby with ash. A new fracture has opened near Etna’s southeast crater and lava has been flowing down an uninhabited slope.

The quake was also felt in the upscale Sicilian resort town of Taormina and in other towns in eastern Sicily.

The Civil Protection agency said temporary shelters were being set up in gyms or municipal buildings for people whose houses were damaged or who were too frightened to return to their homes.

Similar volcanic activity on Etna has been observed many times in past decades, Andrea Billi, a geologist with the state National Council of Research, told RaiNews24.

This kind of activity “can last days or weeks,” he said, “but it’s unpredictable.”

Putin crows as he oversees Russian hypersonic weapons test

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin oversaw a test Wednesday of a new hypersonic glide vehicle, declaring that the weapon is impossible to intercept and will ensure Russia’s security for decades to come.

Speaking to Russia’s top military brass after watching the live feed of the launch of the Avangard vehicle from the Defense Ministry’s control room, Putin said the successful test was a “great success” and an “excellent New Year’s gift to the nation.”

The test comes amid bitter tensions in Russia-U.S. relations, which have sunk to their lowest level since the Cold War times over the conflict in Ukraine, the war in Syria and the allegations of Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Putin’s hopes for repairing ties with Washington un-

der President Donald Trump have fizzled amid investigations into allegations of Trump’s campaign ties with Russia, and tensions have escalated as the U.S. administration slapped Russia with new waves of sanctions.

The Avangard was among the array of new nuclear weapons that Putin presented in March, saying that Russia had to develop them in response to the development of the U.S. missile defense system that could erode Russia’s nuclear deterrent.

In Wednesday’s test, the weapon was launched from the Dombrovskiy missile base in the southern Ural Mountains. The Kremlin said it successfully hit a designated practice target on the Kura shooting range on Kamchatka, 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) away.

“The Avangard is invulner-

able to intercept by any existing and prospective missile defense means of the potential adversary,” Putin said after the test, adding that the new weapon will enter service next year with the military’s Strategic Missile Forces.

When first presenting the Avangard in March, the Russian leader said the new system has an intercontinental range and can fly in the atmosphere at 20 times the speed of sound, bypassing the enemy’s missile defense.

He emphasized that no other country currently has hypersonic weapons.

Putin has said that Avangard is designed using new composite materials to withstand temperatures of up to 2,000 degrees Celsius (3,632 degrees Fahrenheit) that come from a flight through the atmosphere at hypersonic speeds.

Off The Wall

SCIENCE SAYS

A big space crash likely made Uranus lopsided

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP SCIENCE WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Uranus is a lopsided oddity, the only planet to spin on its side. Scientists now think they know how it got that way: It was pushed over by a rock at least twice as big as Earth.

Detailed computer simulations show that an enormous

rock crashed into the seventh planet from the sun, said Durham University astronomy researcher Jacob Kegerreis, who presented his analysis at a large earth and space science conference this month.

Uranus is unique in the solar system. The massive planet tilts about 90 degrees on its side, as do its five largest moons. Its magnetic field



This image made from video provided by Durham University astronomy researcher Jacob Kegerreis shows a computer simulation generated by the open-source code SWIFT that depicts an object crashing into the planet Uranus.

is also lopsided and doesn't go out the poles like ours does, said NASA chief scientist Jim Green. It also is the only planet that doesn't have its interior heat escape from the core. It has rings like Saturn, albeit faint ones.

"It's very strange," said Carnegie Institution planetary scientist Scott Sheppard, who wasn't part of the research.

The computer simulations show that the collision and reshaping of Uranus—maybe enveloping some or all of the rock that hit it—happened in a matter of hours, Kegerreis said. He produced an animation showing the violent crash and its aftermath.

It's also possible that the big object that knocked over Uranus is still lurking in the solar

system too far for us to see, said Green. It would explain some of the orbits of the planet and fit with a theory that a missing planet X is circling the sun well beyond Pluto, he said.

Green said it's possible that a lot of smaller space rocks—the size of Pluto—pushed Uranus over, but Kegerreis' research and Sheppard point to a single huge unknown

suspect. Green said a single impact "is the right thinking."

The collision happened 3 billion to 4 billion years ago, likely before the larger moons of Uranus formed. Instead there was a disk of stuff that would eventually come together to form moons. And when that happened, Uranus' odd tilt acted like a gravity tidal force pushing those five large moons to the same tilt, Kegerreis said.

It also would have created an icy shell that kept Uranus' inner heat locked in, Kegerreis said. (Uranus' surface is minus 357 degrees, or minus 216 Celsius.)

Ice is key with Uranus and its neighbor Neptune. A little more than a decade ago, NASA reclassified those two planets as "ice giants," no longer lumping them with the other large planets of the solar system, the gas giants Saturn and Jupiter.

Pluto, which is tiny, farther from the sun and not even officially a planet anymore, has been explored more than Uranus and Neptune. They only got brief flybys by Voyager 2, the space probe that entered interstellar space last month.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Police: Naked man tears down neighbor's holiday decorations

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—Investigators say a 61-year-old Wisconsin man was arrested for tearing down a neighbor's Christmas decorations while drunk and naked. The Green Bay Gazette reports that Gregory Brannigan faces misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct and resisting an officer. A criminal complaint shows Brannigan's neighbor called police Wednesday after to report that he was naked, kicking her door and tearing down her decorations. The neighbor told police Brannigan appeared intoxicated. Officers say the Green Bay man was stumbling and told officers he needed to take care of supposed drug dealers in a neighbor's apartment. Investigators say a breath test estimated his blood alcohol level at 0.21, more than twice the legal limit for driving. Court documents don't list an attorney for Brannigan. A message left at a local phone number listed for a Gregory Brannigan was not immediately returned Friday.

2 little pigs 'pardoned' ahead of Miami Christmas Eve feasts

MIAMI (AP)—In a nod to the annual tradition of the U.S. president pardoning two turkeys ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday, a pair of pigs has been spared from roasting for Christmas Eve feasts in Miami. Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez said he was instituting a new holiday tradition when he pardoned little pigs Layla and Luna outside a Miami restaurant Wednesday. In a Miami Herald video, Latin Cafe 2000 owner Katherine Castellanos said she was inspired to suggest the pig pardons because her restaurant has been busy filling catering orders for lechon, or roasted pig. It's the main dish in Nochebuena feasts celebrated by Latin American families on Christmas Eve. She said that when South Florida families

sit down for a holiday meal, "we don't eat turkey, we eat lechon."

Officials: Man broke into home, got owner to give him a ride

WATERBORO, Maine (AP)—Authorities in Maine say a man broke into a home, had a bite to eat, watched TV and even got a car ride from his unsuspecting victim. The York County sheriff's office said 35-year-old Derek Tarbox broke into a Waterboro home Sunday afternoon, took a shower, got dressed in the homeowner's clothing and was watching television when the homeowner arrived. The intruder said he mistakenly thought the house belonged to a friend and asked for a ride home. The homeowner told authorities that seemed plausible, so he drove him to a house in Hollis, which actually belonged to Tarbox's relatives. The victim later realized his home had been ransacked. Tarbox, who was arrested in Limrick, was due to be arraigned on burglary and other charges Wednesday. It was unclear if he has a lawyer.

Man finds a \$10,000 surprise inside designer bag on subway

NEW YORK (AP)—A Chanel purse left in a Manhattan subway station held a \$10,000 surprise for the man who found it. Richard Taverna was at the West 66th Street and Broadway stop earlier this week when he spotted the purse by a platform wall. He tells the West Side Rag online blog that inside, he saw only some paper with Russian writing on it. On Thursday evening at home, he took a closer look and discovered 100 \$100 dollar bills. The next morning, Taverna brought the purse to the local police precinct. But first, he laid out the bills on a table and snapped a photo. Luckily, a woman had reported the missing money to police before going to Russia. It'll await her when she's back in January.

Vermont community attempts to make world's largest s'more

MIDDLESEX, Vt. (AP)—One Vermont community is celebrating the holidays and the winter solstice with a massive bonfire and what they hope will be the world's largest s'more.

The Winter S'morestice takes place Saturday at Camp Meade in Middlesex and includes fire artists and dancers, music, food, beer and wine and, of course, a sampling of the giant s'more.

The local Red Hen Bakery will make the 4-by-8-foot (1.2-by-2.4-meter) concoction, baking its own enormous cracker, whipping up marshmallow and using chocolate from a neighboring business.

The giant dessert will then be chopped up and shared with attendees. Organizers said they were too late in pursuing a Guinness World Record but may try next year.

"This is going to be a feat of baking engineering," said bakery co-owner Randy George.

The project comes at the bakery's busiest time. "We will be making the world's largest s'more when we're also making more bread than we've ever made before," he said.

Organizers have also made a massive bush-like structure out of evergreen branches that will be set on fire. Before the fire, people can walk through the small maze inside it.



This Dec. 20, 2018, photo shows a large bush-like structure made out of evergreens, with an interior maze, that will be set ablaze for a bonfire during a winter celebration on Saturday, Dec. 29, in Middlesex, Vt.

AP

Roadside weed decorated for Christmas sprouts holiday cheer

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP)—A few weeks ago it was just another overgrown street corner weed. Now it's decked out with Christmas lights and ornaments and sprouting holiday goodwill.

The Christmas weed, as it's affectionately known across Toledo, has become an overnight holiday attraction, bringing out hundreds of children and adults who have been lining up for selfies and leaving behind donations for the needy.

It all began when one family decorated the weed to spread some Christmas cheer. But the sad and scraggly weed has grown into something bigger.

"It's a true Christmas story," said Jimmy Izbinski, who joined the fun this week by putting on a Santa Claus suit and waving to motorists passing by with smiles on their faces. "With love, a weed can be a beautiful thing."

The weed, which once stood 4 feet high (1.2 meters high) and shoots out from

the edge of a traffic island, started out with just a bit of tinsel and garland nearly two weeks ago.

In the past few days, others have added lights, candy canes and glass ornaments—leaving little of the weed visible—while surrounding it with canned goods, blankets, clothes and wrapped gifts. A dead potted plant draped with Santa hats and bows has been added to the collection.

At some point over the past few days, someone apparently

ripped off the top of the weed, but that didn't dampen the good cheer.

Of course, there have been jokes about whether the weed might be the variety that could get you arrested in Ohio, and there's a Facebook page dedicated to daily updates.

So many donations have been pouring in that the city brought in bins on Wednesday to handle the overflow and warned people to be careful while stopping at the busy intersection.

Science & Technology

Estonia edges toward digital government

TALLINN, Estonia (AP)—In the Estonian capital of Tallinn, three-day-old Oskar Lunde sleeps soundly in his hospital cot, snuggled into a lime green blanket decorated with red butterflies. Across the room, his father turns on a laptop.

"Now we will register our child," Andrejs Lunde says with gravity as he inserts his ID card into the card reader. His wife, Olga, looks on proudly.

And just like that, Oskar is Estonia's newest citizen. No paper. No fuss.

This Baltic nation of 1.3 million people is engaged in an ambitious project to make government administration completely digital to reduce bureaucracy, increase transparency and boost economic growth. As more countries shift their services online, Estonia's experiment offers a glimpse of how interacting with the state might be for future generations.

Need a prescription? It's online. Need someone at City Hall? No lines there—or even

at the Department of Motor Vehicles! On the school front, parents can see whether their children's homework was done on time.

Estonia has created one platform that supports electronic authentication and digital signatures to enable paperless communications across both the private and public sectors.

There are still a few things that you can't do electronically in Estonia: marry, divorce or transfer property—and that's only because the government has decided it was important to turn up in person for some big life events.

This spring, government aims to go even further. If Oskar had been born a few months later, he would have been registered automatically, with his parents receiving an email welcoming him into the nation.

Marten Kaevats, Estonia's national digital adviser, says the goal is a government that supports its citizens while staying out of the way.

"In an ideal world, in the case of an invisible government, when a new child is born neither of the parents would ever have to apply for anything: to get maternity leave, to get child support from the municipality, to get a kindergarten place, to put the name to the child," he said. "All of those different services would be delivered automatically."

Siva Vaidhyathan, director of the Center for Media and Citizenship at the University of Virginia, says other countries have a lot to learn. Estonia took time to build security and privacy into its model, in contrast with failed efforts by private companies to provide secure online voting systems in the United States, for example.

"It made sure that state accountability is part of the process," he said.

Estonians largely seem to have embraced the system despite global concerns about data hacks.

Massachusetts prepping for new transportation world

BOSTON (AP)—Ready or not, Massachusetts is speeding headlong into a brave new transportation world.

It may not include flying cars, but state leaders are looking to help pave the way for self-driving cars, an all-electric car future, a transportation grid resilient to climate change, and a planned "reinvention" of the commuter rail system serving metropolitan Boston.

Among the recommendations laid out in a hefty, two-volume report released this month by a state commission on the future of transportation in Massachusetts is for the state to set a goal "that all new cars, light duty trucks, and buses sold in Massachusetts will be electric by 2040."

It's part of a wider blueprint to create what the commission called "a 21st century mobility infrastructure" that will help the state and its cities and towns both manage and make the most of emerging changes in transportation technology and behavior.

Republican Gov. Charlie

Self-driving car hits public roads

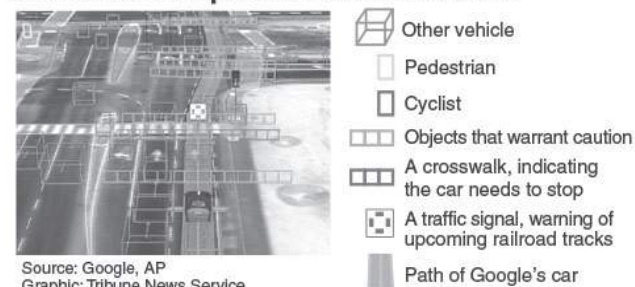
The latest prototype of Google's self-driving car will be tested on public roads this summer. The car wears a hat to hide its sensors and can drive, brake and recognize road hazards without human intervention.

- Video cameras, radar sensors and laser range finders are used to "see"
- The car is electric and can travel 80 miles before recharge
- Max speed: 25 mph, due to a lack of air bags and other federally required safety features
- Google will initially build 25 cars to test in Mountain View, Calif.



The prototype was assembled in Detroit by Roush Industries

How the car's computer understands the world



Source: Google, AP
Graphic: Tribune News Service

Baker signed the executive order creating the commission, charging it with providing his administration an analysis of the different transportation challenges facing the state in

the coming decades.

"We knew this wouldn't be an easy task," Baker said. "The next 20 years in transportation are going to look very different than the last 20 years."

TECH Q&A: Browser video, Web link issues easily fixed

Q: I mainly use the Google Chrome browser on my Windows 10 PC. But sometimes video won't play on that browser, and I have to switch to Mozilla Firefox. Sometimes web links won't work on one of those browsers, but they do work on the Microsoft Edge browser. I'd rather just use one browser; where can I get one that works for everything?

A: All browsers have their problems with video and web links, but most are easy to fix. In Google Chrome, the simplest video remedy is to turn off the PC's "hardware acceleration," in which the PC's processor hands video tasks to a graphics chip. But that doesn't always result in a good video experience. See tinyurl.com/ycktoxdp for details on turning off hardware acceleration.

If that doesn't work, try deleting Chrome's accumulated "browsing data," which can conflict with watching video. See the same [tinyurl](http://tinyurl.com/ycktoxdp) (to make the changes called for, scroll to the bottom of the "settings" screen and click on "advanced.") Note that this deletes the browser's "cookies," the code that identifies you to websites. You will need to log into some websites again.

Clearing Chrome's internet data can also solve some web link problems. Other potential web-link fixes for Chrome include eliminating some

By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.



browser extensions, replacing the user profile or removing unwanted programs (see tinyurl.com/y7xjkh5n).

Some Mozilla Firefox video problems can also be fixed by turning off hardware acceleration (see tinyurl.com/ych4pnkm). But Firefox also has a unique video issue, a feature called either "content blocking" or "tracking protection." The feature prevents someone from adding code to your browser that will track your movements from one website to another. But it can also interfere with watching video. (To turn it off, see tinyurl.com/y7d5rhuo).

Firefox web-link problems can also be solved by turning off hardware acceleration or by clearing the cache and cookies (see tinyurl.com/yb4quccw).

Video problems with the Microsoft Edge browser can often be fixed by enabling or updating the browser's Adobe Flash Player software or by downloading the latest software driver for the PC's video card (see tinyurl.com/y8ykko5d).

y8ykko5d).

To fix Web-link problems with Edge, try clearing the browser data (see tinyurl.com/hk5dblk).

Q: I used a computer-aided design program called AutoSketch 2.1 on early versions of Windows in the 1990s. The program's performance declined in later versions of Windows, and it quit working when Windows 2000 was introduced. There are newer versions of AutoSketch available, but I don't care for them. Is there any way I can use AutoSketch 2.1 on Windows 7?

A: Maybe. Microsoft operating systems since Windows 2000 used a different technical design than previous consumer versions of Windows, so it's not surprising that your older program didn't work with them. But you can try using Windows 7's "compatibility mode," which allows it to imitate the way older versions of Windows worked. Compatibility mode goes back as far as Windows 95, so it may help you (see tinyurl.com/nnvuctm).

Science Matters

GPS is jammed for many reasons

As GPS satellite navigation ties our world closer and closer — and privacy shrinks — many people have reasons, malicious or trivial, to interfere with the GPS signals.

The signals that jammers attack

1 GPS satellite transmits its location and exact time (from onboard atomic clock)

2 GPS device receives signal, uses the exact time to calculate distance to satellite

3 Using three different GPS satellites' signals, receiver calculates its position on the Earth

Teenage mischief ... and military advantage

Simple jammers may be able to prevent parents from monitoring family members' location

Employees can block GPS to keep their employers from tracking their movement

Truckers can jam GPS in an attempt to avoid paying highway tolls

Simple illegal jammer plugs into car's power outlet, generates radio signal blocking GPS within radius of about 15 feet (3 m)



Governments impose heavy fines and imprisonment for interfering with GPS; jammers can be detected easily

In tense regions ...

Nations can block GPS signals that their rivals use for military navigation and weapon control

Jamming can shut down civilian air and sea navigation when powerful jamming transmitters go into action

Source: www.gps.gov; NASA; Gizmodo; GPS World
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service



Life & Style

Mariah Carey's Christmas classic sets new record on Spotify



In this Oct. 9, 2018 file photo, Mariah Carey poses in the press room at the American Music Awards at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles.

AP

Bad headlines for Trump also means ratings slump for Hannity

NEW YORK (AP)—The drumbeat of bad news for President Donald Trump hasn't been good for his most prominent backer in the media.

While Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity will end 2018 as cable news' most popular personality for the second year in a row, he's been slumping in the ratings since the midterm elections and ominous stories related to Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of the president.

His show averaged 2.76 million viewers since the election through Dec. 17, down 19 percent compared to the previous month, the Nielsen company said. Among the 25-to-54-year-old demo most coveted by advertisers, he's down 30 percent. Competitors Rachel Maddow on MSNBC and Chris Cuomo on CNN are up in each measurement.

Maddow has been beating Hannity outright in December, a turnaround from October. During that month, when Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation drama dominated the news, Hannity's audience routinely exceeded Maddow's by about a million people each night, Nielsen said.

"I think it's a reflection of the mood of his audience," said Mark Lukasiewicz, dean of Hofstra University's communications school and a longtime NBC executive. "They can't be happy with

what is coming out of Washington every day."

Hannity has been associated with Trump perhaps more than any other media figure. He was scolded by Fox for being called onstage by the president and speaking during a Trump rally shortly before midterm election. The Pew Research Center found in a 2014 survey that 83 percent of Hannity's viewers identified themselves as conservative.



Hannity

With bad news piling up for Trump, Hannity frequently spends time criticizing ideological opponents in the media for the types of stories they emphasize, and discusses misdeeds by previous Democratic administrations.

"Even hard-core Trump fans are starting to put Hillary Clinton in their rear-view mirrors and say, 'it's been two years,'" Lukasiewicz said.

In a joint statement, Fox News CEO Suzanne Scott and President Jay Wallace touted the network's top status among all basic cable networks.

There's precedent for a news-related slump. Maddow's ratings sank sharply just after the 2016 election, as fans distressed by Trump's win took a timeout from the news. Her ratings steadily improved as her show became a destination for Trump opponents.

Ken LaCorte, a former Fox News executive who spent 20 years at the network,

cautioned against reading too much into a few weeks of ratings. Pulling back for a broader view, Hannity's show will be the most popular on cable news for the second year in a row, with an average of 3.3 million viewers that is up 17 percent over 2017, according to Nielsen.

It's certainly possible that Republicans have been less interested in the news lately, said LaCorte, who is launching a news web site, LaCortenews.com, next month.

"It's probably more interesting to hear about the party you support taking over the House of Representatives because there are more interesting things to discuss," he said.

Hannity also has company. Fox's prime-time schedule as a whole, which also includes Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham, has been down 20 percent since the election, Nielsen said.

Even with Fox's recent slump, the Trump administration continues to be glory days for cable news. Fox News Channel is the top-rated network for all of basic cable for the third year in a row, topping ESPN, and will finish with the highest-rated prime-time schedule in its history. That comes despite losing Bill O'Reilly and Megyn Kelly from its lineup over the past two years.

MSNBC is third overall in basic cable, and is also on pace to finish with the biggest audience in its history, Nielsen said. CNN will finish 11th, and is likely to finish with its third-best year ever.

NEW YORK (AP)—Mariah Carey's 24-year-old Christmas classic is so popular it set a new one-day streaming record on Spotify on Christmas Eve.

Chart Data reported that "All I Want for Christmas Is You," released in 1994, was played 10.8 million times on Spotify on Monday. The song bested the record set by rapper-singer XXXTentacion, who logged 10.4 million streams with "SAD!" a day after his death in June.

Spotify wouldn't comment on the news when reached by The Associated Press. Carey called the new feat "such an amazing Christmas gift" in an Instagram post on Tuesday.

Every holiday season "All I Want for Christmas Is You" begins to climb the Billboard charts as its popularity resurfaces. This year the song reached its highest peak—No. 6—on the Billboard Hot 100 chart; it's currently No. 7 on the chart.

The success has helped

Carey's first Christmas album, 1994's "Merry Christmas," spend its fourth week at No. 1 on Billboard's R&B albums chart.

The current Hot 100 chart features 20 holiday songs:

■ No. 7, Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You"

■ No. 10, Andy Williams' "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year"

■ No. 11, Brenda Lee's "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree"

■ No. 12, Burl Ives' "A Holly Jolly Christmas"

■ No. 13, Bobby Helms' "Jingle Bell Rock"

■ No. 17, Nat King Cole's "The Christmas Song (Merry Christmas to You)"

■ No. 27, Wham!'s "Last Christmas"

■ No. 28, Gene Autry's "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"

■ No. 32, Dean Martin's "Let It Snow, Let It Snow,

Let It Snow"

■ No. 33, The Ronettes' "Sleigh Ride"

■ No. 34, Jose Feliciano's "Feliz Navidad"

■ No. 35, Gene Autry's "Here Comes Santa Claus (Down Santa Claus Lane)"

■ No. 41, Perry Como's "(There's No Place Like) Home for the Holidays"

■ No. 42, Perry Como & The Fontane Sisters' "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas"

■ No. 45, John & Yoko/The Plastic Ono Band's "Happy Xmas (War Is Over)" (with the Harlem Community Choir)

■ No. 47, Paul McCartney's "Wonderful Christmastime"

■ No. 48, Bing Crosby's "White Christmas"

■ No. 50, Darlene Love's "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)"

■ No. 68, Katy Perry's "Cozy Little Christmas"

■ No. 90, Lauren Daigle's "The Christmas Song" (AP)

Oliver Hardy was terrifying, inspiring for John C. Reilly

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Playing Oliver Hardy, the large comic with the even larger persona, was a burden that became a mission for John C. Reilly.

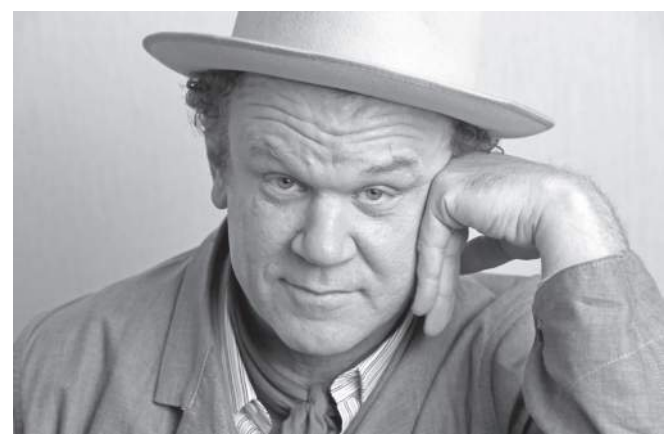
The actor had early misgivings about becoming the man whose legendary partnership with Stan Laurel is explored in "Stan & Ollie," which will be released Friday in the United States by Sony Pictures Classics.

"It was a pretty terrifying prospect," Reilly told The Associated Press in an interview earlier this month after learning the role had earned him a Golden Globe nomination. "Those are some very big shoes to fill, no pun intended. I didn't know that it was going to work out so well. It was really an act of faith."

At the beginning of the process, Reilly developed a deep affection for Hardy through books, through Hardy's letters to his wife and through the more than 100 screen appearances he made with Laurel, played by Steve Coogan.

It was on finding out how neglected Hardy and his partner were late in their lives and careers—the period explored in the film, which documents a trying tour through the United Kingdom in the early 1950s when the men were in their early 60s—that Reilly felt not only a compulsion but also a duty to do it.

"I just didn't feel I was worthy at first," Reilly said. "But



In this Sept. 8, 2018 photo John C. Reilly, poses for a portrait at the Adelaide Hotel during the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto.

AP

when you learn about Laurel and Hardy, and how the world kind of forgot them at the end of their life, I realized I had to do this for Oliver. I would just keep saying, 'do it for Oliver.'"

He took on the entirety of Hardy for the part, mentally and physically, spending four hours in the makeup chair on shooting days and taking on the full feeling of his body.

"I had weights built into the fat suit so that I could always feel that, you know, the heft of it, so I wouldn't just feel like this light foam suit," Reilly said. "And I think I started to rue that decision by the end because the weight was just like—it was a lot every day to carry."

Other aspects of Hardy were easier to imitate.

"Ollie really loved good times, and was always after wine, women and song. I can relate to that," Reilly said with a laugh. "I mean, I work a lot

too, but I can relate to that."

Reilly, 53, has made a specialty of playing sidekicks, from his breakout role behind Mark Wahlberg in 1997's "Boogie Nights" through several second-fiddle roles alongside Will Ferrell, most recently in the newly released "Holmes & Watson."

But with Coogan, he has the equal billing and true partnership of the men they're playing.

"Steve and I not only got to know each other and found a working relationship through all the rehearsals and the singing and dancing, but we also found the guys themselves," Reilly said. "That's what they did all day. So, we started to feel like them after a while."

"We knuckled down,"

Coogan told the AP at a screening of the film in New York early in this month. "We had a long rehearsal period. We learned the dance routines."

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—The Museum of Black Civilizations in Senegal opened this month amid a global conversation about the ownership and legacy of African art. The West African nation's culture minister isn't shy: He wants the thousands of pieces of cherished heritage taken from the continent over the centuries to come home.

"It's entirely logical that Africans should get back their artworks," Abdou Latif Coulibaly told The Associated Press. "These works were taken in conditions that were perhaps legitimate at the time but illegitimate today."

Last month, a report commissioned by French President Emmanuel Macron recommended that French museums give back works taken without consent, if African countries request them. Macron has stressed the "undeniable crimes of European colonization," adding that "I cannot accept that a large part of African heritage is in France."

The new museum in Dakar is the latest sign that welcoming spaces across the continent are being prepared.

The museum, with its focus on Africa and the diaspora, is decades in the making. The

At new Museum of Black Civilizations, a call to come home



AP
In this photo taken Thursday, Dec. 6, 2018, an installation by Haitian artist Philippe Dodard's "La Movement en Memoire," stands like a ship inside a gallery of contemporary African art and contemporary art during the inauguration in Dakar, Senegal.

Continuous Creation of Humanity," and the museum's curator take a far longer view than the recent centuries of colonization and turmoil. Current works highlight the continent as the "cradle of civilization" and the echoes found among millions of people in the diaspora today.

"Colonization? That's just two centuries," curator Hamady Bocoum told the AP, saying that proof of African civilization is at least 7,000 years old, referencing a skull discovered in present-day Chad.

Like others, Bocoum is eager to see artifacts return for good. The exhibition includes 50 pieces on loan from France, including more than a dozen from the Quai Branly museum in Paris.

More than 5,000 pieces in the Quai Branly come from Senegal alone, Bocoum said.

"When we see the inventory of the Senegalese objects that are found in France, we're going to ask for certain of those objects," Bocoum said. "For the moment, we have not yet started negotiations."

idea was conceived when Senegal's first president, internationally acclaimed poet Leopold Sedar Senghor, hosted the World Black Festival of Arts

in 1966.

At the museum's vibrant opening, sculptors from Los Angeles, singers from Cameroon and professors from Eu-

rope and the Americas came to celebrate, some in tears. "This moment is historic," Senegalese President Macky Sall said. "It is part of the continu-

ity of history."

Perhaps reflecting the tenuous hold that African nations still have on their own legacy objects, the museum will not have a permanent collection. Filling the 148,000-square-foot circular structure, one of the largest of its kind on the continent, is complicated by the fact that countless artifacts have been dispersed around the world.

Both the inaugural exhibition, "African Civilizations:

Jordan Peele gifts horror fans with first 'Us' trailer on Christmas

By **AMY KAUFMAN**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Just when you thought there were no presents left under the tree, Jordan Peele went and dropped a gift of his own online.

Early Christmas morning, the "Get Out" director unveiled the trailer for his next horror flick, "Us," which will hit theaters March 15. The Universal Pictures release has

been shrouded in mystery ever since it was announced, and once the trailer was posted Tuesday morning, it quickly became a top trending topic on Twitter.

The film, which stars Lupita Nyong'o and Winston Duke, follows a family whose Northern California beach vacation goes south when they realize they are under attack by haunted versions of themselves. In the trailer, we watch as one

of the family's kids wanders off on the beach and runs into a male figure frozen in the sand. This must be a bad sign, because before long, the foursome's terrifying doppelgangers—apparently creepy monsters deemed "the Tethered"—turn up at the family's beachside casa to stalk them.

Peele, of course, is coming off a big year: After grossing over \$176 million at the do-

mestic box office, "Get Out" was honored at the Oscars for original screenplay. The genre film was lauded for raising a cultural discussion about race, though Peele says that isn't what he's hoping to do with "Us." "It is instead about something that I feel has become an undeniable truth. And that is the simple fact that we are our own worst enemies," he told the Hollywood Reporter.

'Big Bang' star Mayim Bialik doing 'better' after struggling with pre-holidays breakup

By **DANIELLE CINONE**
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

"The Big Bang Theory" star Mayim Bialik is newly single and feeling better after her pre-holidays breakup.

Bialik publicly revealed her struggles in an Instagram post on Christmas Eve.

"The government is in a shutdown, it's Christmas Eve day, I'm newly single and not doing so well to be quite honest," the 42-year-old actress wrote on Instagram Monday.

"But the most pressing issue right now is that my cats—after 2 years together—have started a dominance war that involves urine and feces. Long story short my bed is not able to be slept in and I'm sleeping on my couch."

Despite her heartache, Bialik assured everyone the following day that her spirits had lifted.

"Better this morning," she wrote in Tuesday post. "Couch more comfortable with blanket as substitute sheet. New

earrings by my friend's daughter Iris cheered me up. Cat on meds for kidney infection and hopefully he will be better soon."

Bialik, who is Jewish, spent Christmas Day eating Chinese food and watching a movie.

The actress—who was formerly married to Michael Stone, but divorced in 2012 after their 9-year marriage—opened up about the difficulties of being newly single during the holidays in a recent blog post.

"My love story is nothing particularly exceptional. I mean, he was—er, is. I was an exceptional iteration of myself with him. For five years in fact. And now it's over," the mother of two wrote in the post, published to GrokNation on Dec. 18.

"There is rarely good timing for a break up. But most certainly, the worst time is now. In case he is reading this, I'm just meh with this timing. Because say what you will, the holidays are a time to not be recently broken up."



Bialik

Kevin Spacey charged with sex assault

By **RACHEL DESANTIS**
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Actor Kevin Spacey has been charged with indecent assault and battery more than two years after he allegedly groped the son of a former Boston news anchor.

Spacey will be arraigned on the felony charge Jan. 7 at Nantucket District Court, Cape and Islands District Attorney Michael O'Keefe said.

Heather Unruh said in November 2017 that the "House of Cards" actor caused her 18-year-old son "tremendous anger and anxiety" after he grabbed his genitals at a club on Nantucket Island in July 2016.

The ex-journalist took the allegations to police and filed a report last year, as her son finally felt comfortable coming forward with his claims after Spacey was accused of similar behavior by at least a dozen other men.

The family's attorney, Mitchell Garabedian, praised

the victim for his bravery in coming forward in a statement Monday.

"The complainant has shown a tremendous amount of courage in coming forward. Let the facts be presented, the relevant law applied and a just and fair verdict rendered," the statement read. "Because of the pending criminal matter I have no further comment."

Unruh previously made clear that she would stop at nothing to seek justice for her son, and fully intended on putting Spacey, 59, behind bars.

"I want to see Kevin Spacey go to jail," Unruh said at a news conference at the time. "I want to see Kevin Spacey have the hand of justice come down on him, not just for my son, but for the many others who have yet to speak their truth."

She accused Spacey of ply-



Spacey

ing her son with alcohol at The Club Car, then sticking his hand inside the teen's pants and grabbing his genitals before encouraging him to drink even more. Her son allegedly made a break for it when Spacey went to the bathroom.

Los Angeles prosecutors in September failed to file criminal charges against Spacey, claiming that the statute of limitations on two alleged crimes had expired.

The Oscar-winning actor remains under investigation by Scotland Yard for three separate sexual assault allegations.

Meanwhile, Spacey broke a yearlong Twitter silence just minutes after news of his arraignment broke with a video titled "Let Me Be Frank" that appeared to feature him in character as his late "House of Cards" character Frank Underwood.

Miley Cyrus, Liam Hemsworth reportedly got married

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Lindsay Lohan's stepmom accused of trying to commandeer bus

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP)—Authorities say the stepmother of actress Lindsay Lohan tried to commandeer an occupied bus and attacked its driver on Christmas Day. Pennsylvania State Police said Wednesday they arrested 36-year-old Kate Major Lohan of Boca Raton, Florida, and charged her with driving under the influence, disorderly conduct, harassment and public drunkenness. She made bail and was released Wednesday. Major Lohan didn't have a home phone listing, and a defense lawyer wasn't listed on court documents. The Morning Call of Allentown says court records allege she was angry that she missed her stop, and began assaulting the bus driver, pushing buttons and asking about the brakes before a passenger ejected her from the driver's seat. Major Lohan, who attended high school in Allentown, is mar-

ried to Michael Lohan, the father of Lindsay Lohan.

Alice Walker defends praise of widely condemned author

NEW YORK (AP)—Alice Walker is defending her praise of a British author widely condemned as an anti-Semitic conspiracy theorist. Walker, best known for her novel "The Color Purple," wrote on her blog this week that David Icke's work was "very important to humanity's conversation," and disputed allegations of his anti-Semitism. She also tied the "smear" of Icke, and herself, to her protests against Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. Many criticized Walker after she cited Icke's "And the Truth Shall Set You Free" as a favorite book during a recent New York Times interview. Icke has promoted the fraudulent, anti-Semitic "The Protocols of Zion" and has blamed "a small Jewish clique" for helping start World War I and World War II. He has also said the world has been infiltrated by alien reptiles.



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth appear to have tied the knot amid reports the couple got married in a secret wed-

ding ceremony.

Cyrus posted three black-and-white photos of her and Hemsworth on the singer's Instagram and Twitter accounts

on Wednesday. She captioned her photos writing "10 years later ..." and "12.23.18," possibly indicating the day they exchanged vows.

Robin Thicke surprises girlfriend with marriage proposal

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Singer Robin Thicke surprised his pregnant girlfriend with a marriage proposal.

The 41-year-old "Blurred Lines" singer proposed to model April Love Geary with friends and family. She announced the couple's engagement in an Instagram post

Monday as a video shows Thicke asking the 24-year-old Geary to marry him and her writing "YES YES 1000x YES."

The post featured pictures of Thicke



Thicke

and Geary hugging and kissing in front of a Christmas tree. In the video, the Grammy-nominated singer hands her the ring as Geary asks "Are you serious?" before they embrace each other.

The 26-year-old Cyrus shared another photo of her and Hemsworth kissing. He also posted a photo of them with words "My love."

In each picture, Cyrus is dressed in all-white while the 28-year-old actor is wearing a tuxedo with white shoes.

Cyrus and Hemsworth's representatives did not immediately respond to an email requesting comment.

The couple reconnected in 2015 after an on-and-off relationship. They both starred in the 2010 romantic drama "The Last Song."

'Glee' actor Jesse Luken busted for DUI

"Glee" actor Jesse Luken was reportedly arrested for driving under the influence in California.

Luken reeked of booze and failed a sobriety test from Glendale police officers, according to TMZ.

Los Angeles County arrest records show he was booked for a misdemeanor charge on Dec. 6, 2018. He posted \$5,000 bail and was released

that same day.

Cops were called to the scene after getting a call about a car crash, TMZ reported. Luken's Toyota was allegedly found on the curb with the airbag deployed. No other cars were involved.



Luken

did not immediately respond for comment.

The actor, 35, played jock Bobby "Boom Boom" Surette on four episodes of the hit Fox show. He's also had minor roles in numerous other television series, including "Timeless" and "Justified."

(New York Daily News)

Representatives for Lukens

Barack Obama appears on Miranda's latest 'Hamilton' song

NEW YORK (AP)—Barack Obama, or Barap Obama?

The former U.S. president appears on a reworked song by Lin-Manuel Miranda originally from the Broadway hit "Hamilton." Released Friday, "One Last Time (44 Remix)" features Obama reciting a passage from George Washington's farewell address.

The song also features vocals from Tony nominee Chris-

topher Jackson, who played Washington in "Hamilton." The track was produced by Grammy-winning gospel singer BeBe Winans and Tony and Grammy winner Alex Lacamoire.

Miranda performed his song "Alexander Hamilton" at the White House in 2009 when Obama was in of-



Obama

fice. He went on to write "Hamilton," which hit Broadway in 2015 and became a cultural phenomenon, winning 11 Tonys, a Pulitzer Prize and a Kennedy Center Honor.

Miranda returned to the White House to perform "One Last Time" in 2017 in a farewell to Obama.

Man without a romantic bone in his body irks his girlfriend

DEAR ABBY: I am 25 and have been with my boyfriend on and off for five years. I love him very much. I often overthink things, and a constant frustration of mine is that he makes no romantic gestures at all. He drowns me in compliments and shows his love in other ways.

I always have to take the initiative and suggest he do romantic things like send me cards or flowers, take me to dinner, etc., but he only does them when I ask. It doesn't feel like enough for me. I worry that when we get married, over time I will grow bored or no longer be attracted to him because he is so unromantic. Am I just overthinking? What should I do?

ROMANTIC ONE IN AUSTIN

DEAR ROMANTIC: From what you have written it seems that you may be more in love with the idea of romantic gestures than you are with the man you have. Many women would be thrilled to have someone who drowns them with compliments and shows his love in other ways. If you are truly worried that you will be bored if you marry him or—worse—turned off, then please, turn him loose so he can find someone who appreciates him for who he is, and you can meet someone who will make your dreams come true.

DEAR ABBY: My friend who was suddenly widowed two years ago continues to insert her late husband into every con-

versation with friends and strangers alike. She's still depressed, grieving and searching for significance, and she shares it all in person and online.

Early on, she had counseling but no longer feels it necessary. She claims it helps her to talk about him constantly. Most of us close to her avoid the elephant in the room. I find myself apologizing for her in group gatherings I take her to. People try to offer sympathy, but are surprised when they realize he's been gone two years.

I endure with love, but wonder if this is the best path. Personally, I want to let him rest in peace. But that's hard when he's always "in the room." Advice?

WANTING TO MOVE FORWARD

DEAR WANTING: Everyone grieves in their own way and on their own timetable. However, your friend may need more support and counseling than you and others she meets socially can offer. She has my sympathy, but that deeply grieving woman needs to hear what you have written to me. Tell her, as kindly as possible, that she needs to vent to a professional so she can get more help through this difficult period.

DEAR ABBY: A male family friend who is gay works at a local business my wife and I patronize regularly. We always stop and chat when he's there, but he does something that ir-

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



ritates me. He addresses my wife as "Sweetie." My wife thinks I'm being silly because he's gay; I say one's sexual orientation doesn't negate manners and how one man should address another man's wife. I'm not annoyed to the point that I'd confront the guy, but I promised my wife I'd ask you your opinion.

BOTHERED IN NEW YORK

DEAR BOTHERED: There is nothing rude about a family friend—gay or straight—calling someone's wife "Sweetie." My opinion is you should lighten up.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



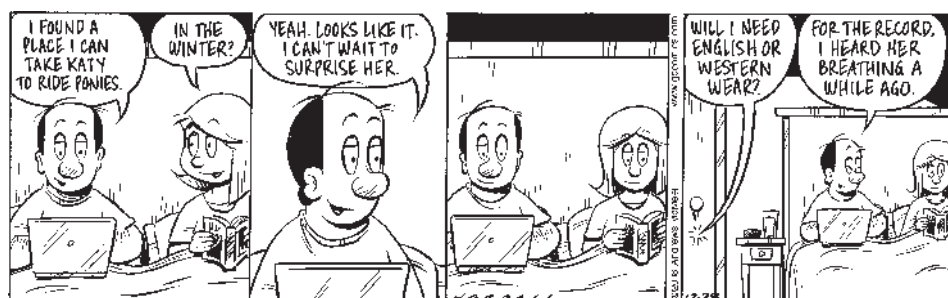
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



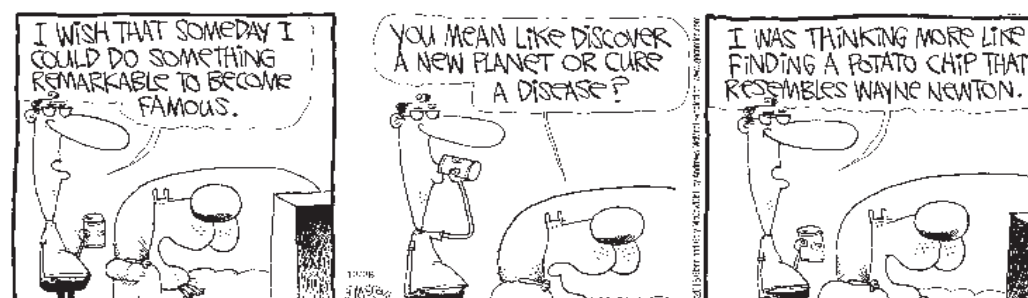
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Priestly garment
4 Boutique
8 Farm fathers
12 Wish otherwise
13 Days gone by
14 Norway's capital
15 Type of well
17 Group of quail
18 Creatures
19 Pair with an air
21 Filming site
22 Maestro
26 Seraglio
29 Wolf
30 R-V link
31 Big-screen format
32 However
33 Beholds
34 Thither
35 Weep
36 German sausage

DOWN

37 Blood line
39 Nonstick spray
40 Clothing protector
41 Not qualified
45 Jupiter's wife
48 News-paper pieces
50 Data
51 Dresden denial
52 Bit of advice
53 Moo juice
54 "Phooey!"
55 Utter

2 Entice
3 Alpha follower
4 Method
5 Raise, as a flag
6 Mouths (Lat.)
7 Necklace ornament
8 Man of steel?
9 Enzyme suffix
10 1055, to Nero
11 Sauce source
16 English county
20 Coffee vessel
23 Addict

24 Numbered
25 Expel
26 Informal greeting
27 Latin love
28 Harangue
29 Young lion
32 *NSYNC or Hanson, e.g.
33 Poison — lead-in
35 Lanka
36 On the decline
38 Kindle
39 Russian download
42 Diner orders
43 "Star Wars" royal
44 Glimpse
45 Morrison of The Doors
46 Numerical prefix
47 Patriots' org.
49 Actor

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-28

Stephen

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: John Legend, 40; Denzel Washington, 64; Edgar Winter, 72; Dame Maggie Smith, 84.

Happy Birthday: Don't let emotions override what's right. Practical solutions will bring the best results. Take your time and refuse to be sideswiped by someone who thinks he or she knows what's best for you. A serious look at financial, legal and medical issues will help offset pending problems that have the potential to stand in your way. Your numbers are 6, 17, 20, 29, 36, 38, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't be so hard on yourself. Look at what you've accomplished and consider what you want to do moving forward. Don't let regrets stand between you and the success you deserve. Follow your beliefs, not someone else's. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Step things up a notch and make the changes that will help you prepare for what's to come. Move forward with anticipation and desire to double up on the things that bring you the most joy. Romance should be a priority. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take better care of your relationships with others. Listen and respond with love and compassion. Refuse to let anyone taint what you say or are trying to do. Stand up and be counted; you will have no regrets. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Look for the good in everyone. Share insight into circumstances that seem bleak or impossible to conquer and you'll be joined by those

who share your vision and are ready to fight your battle. Love and romance are in the stars. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Join in the fun and enjoy, but don't overdo it or make a spectacle that can damage your reputation. Make positive changes, and bring joy to those you love. Good things will happen. Walk away from poor influences and meddlers. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Refuse to get into a debate with someone you live with. Keep the peace and surround yourself with the people who bring out the best in you. Put love first and realize everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Get together with friends or those who share your concerns, beliefs and goals. Don't let someone weigh you down or make you feel bad about who you are or how you look. A gift or offering will take you by surprise. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): The experience you share with someone special will open your mind to a brighter future. Take pride in who you are, and start living life your way. Take a step toward spiritual freedom and inner happiness. Romance is highlighted. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't overreact or expect people to always be at their best. Be a witness, not a contributor, when dealing with those you don't share ideals with. How you react will determine the response you get in return. Stay focused and humble. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Listen to your heart and follow through with your plans. Take the initiative to share with those you trust, and protect against those you don't. Size up situations and act on your own behalf. Romance should be a priority. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Understanding what others are up against will help you have a calming effect that will ease stress and make it possible for you to offer help. A positive change you make will impress as well as inspire others to follow. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Hold back criticism and replace it with compassion and suggestions that are helpful. Your input can make a difference to the outcome of someone's life. What you do today will leave an impression on the people you care about most. ***

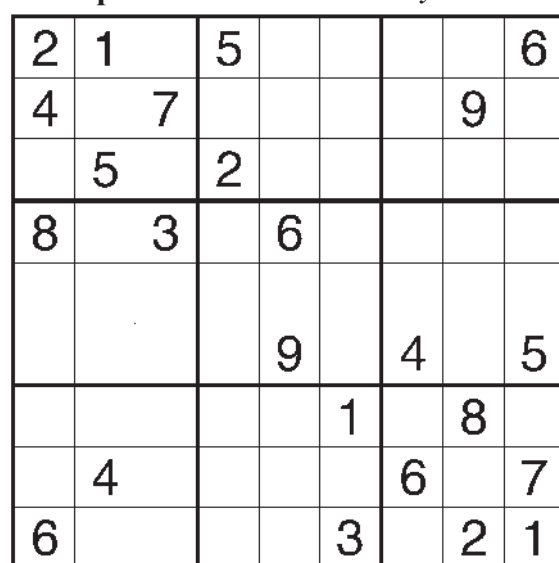
Birthday Baby: You are imaginative, caring and concise. You are motivating and enthusiastic.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

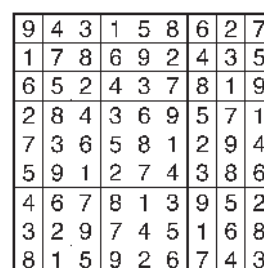
Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/28

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SALADS ARE HEALTHY AND SATISFYING! Solution: 6 letters

M T G R O T A M O T O S S E D
A A L W O B E H S E R F N B O
N R Y A A P P L E S R E O A O
D O T O S G G E V U F T J C F
A R I I N E C H I V E A I O A
R L E T C N L T L S H E D N E
I A U S I H A D O L C O E A S
N C G G S R O I O I R N L I U
S H E E U I T K S O U I L L G
P I C B N R N U E E N O I A A
I C U E E I A G N S C N R T R
N K T E L R V N B C H S G I A
A E T T S E G A O O T A T O P
C N E S B E R R I E S E E D S
H S L A W C B Y R O C I H C A

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Apples, Artichokes, Arugula, Asparagus, Bacon, Beets, Berries, Bowl, Broccoli, Celery, Chef, Chicken, Chicory, Chive, Crab, Crunch, Dijon, Dressing, Eggs, Feta, Fresh, Fruit, Grilled, Iceberg, Italian, Lettuce, Mandarins, Mayonnaise, Noodles, Nutrition, Oils, Olives, Onions, Potato, Salt, Seafood, Seeds, Slaw, Spinach, Tomato, Tossed, Vinegar

Yesterday's Answer: Superheroes
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STUMPED?

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Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
FOR THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS**

BANK OF GUAM,

Plaintiff,

vs.

**BRIAN D. RICHARDS and
REGINA E. MASGA
fka REGINA M. RICHARDS,**

Defendants.

**Civil Action
No. 14-0219(R)**

**NOTICE OF
HEARING ON
PLAINTIFF'S
MOTION FOR
AN ORDER TO
SHOW CAUSE
and CONTEMPT
OF COURT**

**TO: DEFENDANTS BRIAN D. RICHARDS and
REGINA E. MASGA fka REGINA M.
RICHARDS:**

Please take notice that Plaintiff, Bank of
Guam has filed a Motion for an Order to Show
Cause Re: Contempt of Court. This Motion for an
Order to Show Cause is based on Defendants'
violation of the Court's orders by failing to make the
required monthly payments to Plaintiff therefore
they should be held in contempt. The Court will hold
a hearing on the motion on **January 4, 2019 at 9:00
a.m.** You may file any responsive pleadings as you
deem appropriate and provide copies thereof to
Plaintiff's counsel, Robert T. Torres at the above
address.

/s/ Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk



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part, and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands. All bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/ **DONNIE P. MILITANTE**
Acting Executive Director

/s/ **JOSEPH A. TUDELA**
Acting Director, Procurement & Supply



Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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RFP 19-CHCC/CGC-005**

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JANUARY 14, 2019 TIME: 09:00AM

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/s/ **ESTHER L. MUNA**
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/s/ **PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO**
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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Packers interview 2 ex-Colts coaches for job



GREEN BAY— The Green Bay Packers have interviewed a pair of former Indianapolis Colts head coaches as part of their search for Mike McCarthy's replacement.

Chuck Pagano and Jim Caldwell, neither employed in the NFL at this time, were two of the first interviews president/CEO Mark Murphy and general manager Brian Gutekunst conducted in what is expected to be an extensive search for a new coach.

Multiple sources told the Journal Sentinel and PackersNews.com that Pagano had been interviewed. The Journal Sentinel and PackersNews.com confirmed ProFootballTalk's report that Caldwell had been interviewed.

The Packers are not allowed to talk to anyone employed by an NFL team until the regular season is over and so they have been working on candidates who are out of the NFL. They are allowed to talk to college coaches, but most won't talk to them until their bowl games are completed.

Pagano, who coached the Colts from 2012-17 has connections to several coaches on the Packers' staff. He hired interim coach Joe Philbin as assistant head coach and offensive line coach in 2016 and passing game coordinator Jim Hostler in 2015. He also worked with defensive coordinator Mike Pettine for one year in Baltimore.

Pagano went 53-43 in regular-season games and 3-3 in postseason games with the Colts. The team missed the playoffs three straight seasons and he was fired after the 2017 campaign.

Pagano battled acute promyelocytic leukemia early in his tenure and took a leave of absence. During his absence, a



movement to support him and other cancer survivors became known as "ChuckStrong."

Caldwell has had two head coaching stints. He coached the Detroit Lions from 2014-17 and the Colts from 2009-11.

Caldwell has a lifetime

regular-season record of 62-50 and is 2-4 in the postseason. Prior to being the Colts' head coach, he was Peyton Manning's position coach for seven years.

Taking over for the retired Tony Dungy in 2011, Caldwell

went 14-2 in his first season and took the Colts to the Super Bowl, where they lost to New Orleans. The following year, he went 10-6 and in his third year he was without Manning for the entire season and went 2-14.

He was fired and Pagano

^{AP} Green Bay Packers' J'Mon Moore (82) takes a hit from New York Jets kicker Jason Myers (2) while returning a kickoff during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 23, 2018, in East Rutherford, N.J.

took over.

Caldwell spent two seasons as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach with Baltimore before the Detroit Lions hired him to be their head coach in 2014. Caldwell went 36-28 in four seasons before being fired at the end of a 9-7 season.

The Lions made the playoffs once in his four years.

Meanwhile, the Packers wideout Davante Adams is optimistic that he will be able to play in Green Bay's season finale against the Detroit Lions, a game in which he would have a shot to break a couple of franchise receiving records.

Adams missed practice on Wednesday. The star receiver hurt his right knee in last week's 44-38 overtime win over the New York Jets.

"I see myself being out there. I'm always going to be optimistic. A little sore right now, but we'll play it throughout the week and see how it feels," Adams said in the locker room.

The Packers (6-8-1) were eliminated from playoff contention two weeks ago. They placed another key starter, Kenny Clark, on injured reserve on Wednesday after the defensive lineman missed the past two games with an elbow injury.

With 111 catches, Adams is two shy of breaking the club record set by Sterling Sharpe in 1993. He's also 134 yards shy of breaking the single-season mark set by Jordy Nelson (1,519) in 2014.

Brady plans 'to not only play next year, but beyond that'

Tom Brady is about to complete his 19th NFL regular season Sunday and will then embark on yet another playoff run.

But even though he'd turn 42 before the start of next season, he offered a clear indication that he expects to be back—and potentially for many years to come.

"I absolutely believe I will," Brady said Monday night in a radio interview with Westwood One when asked if he planned to continue his career. "I know I've talked about it for a long time. I have goals to not only play next year, but beyond that. And I'm going to try to do it as best I possibly can. I'm going to give it everything I have, like I always have. It will certainly be a challenge. I don't take any of these things for granted, but I hope I can keep playing, and I hope I can keep playing at a championship level."

This season has been somewhat of a challenge for Brady. Though he has produced solid numbers, New England's passing offense doesn't look as crisp and efficient as it typically does. On occasion, he's misfired on passes he normally would complete with ease.

Brady, the NFL MVP in 2017, has connected this year on 65.4 percent of his passes for 4,105 yards with 25 touchdowns and 11 interceptions—the most picks he has thrown since 2013. His quarterback rating of 95.4 is also the lowest since an 87.3 mark, also in 2013.

"I've been able to be in a

career for 19 years that I love," Brady said. "And I wake up every day excited to go to work. And I wake up every day fulfilled with what I'm doing. I don't think there's any greater gift in my life than to have that. Along with that has come a lot of other very cool opportunities, but in my heart and soul, I love playing the sport of football. And it's brought me so much joy in my life."

"It tests you in so many ways. I've been dealing with it for a long time. There's anxiousness and nerves, and there's joy and happiness, there's disappointment and frustration. The emotions run the gamut. But if you can stay and build your mental toughness, it has just been incredibly rewarding. And I'm a very, very lucky man."

Brady has appeared on the injury report with a left knee issue and was removed late in last week's 24-12 victory against the Bills, perhaps to give him additional rest. However he downplayed the notion that the knee is affecting his play.

"I'm feeling really good," Brady said. "It's been 15 weeks of football, and there's always bumps and bruises you deal with. But I'm feeling great for this time of year. I'll take it every year to be feeling as good as I am at this time of the season."

The Patriots are 10-5 and still alive for the AFC's No. 1 seed. To seize it, though, they would need to beat the Jets on Sunday and get help in the form of losses by both the Chiefs and Chargers.

With future uncertain, Eli Manning focusing on Cowboys

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—For the second straight year, two-time Super Bowl MVP Eli Manning is heading into an offseason with an uncertain future as New York Giants quarterback.

The Giants (5-10) are going to miss the playoffs for the sixth time in seven years. Many are wondering whether general manager Dave Gettleman and coach Dave Shurmur will be looking for a more mobile quarterback to replace the soon-to-be 38-year-old Manning.

The Giants don't have any heir apparent on the roster with rookie Kyle Lauletta and veteran Alex Tanney. That would leave the draft or free agency to find one.

Manning has not had a bad

year statistically. He is 356 of 535 for 3,998 yards, 19 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. When his shaky line gives him time to throw (46 sacks allowed) and opens up holes for rookie Saquon Barkley, he is more than adequate. He still has the arm, he rarely gets hurt, and his understanding of the game is better than most quarterbacks.

His drawback is a \$22 million salary cap hit next season, something Gettleman might look to adjust.

Manning said last year was the first time his future really came up. He is not surprised it's happened again.

However, he is not going into Sunday game against the NFC East champion Dallas Cowboys

(9-6) thinking this might be his last game with the Giants. He has been their starting quarterback since the second half of his rookie year in 2004.

"No, just worried about this game and finishing this season, and going out there and playing hard," Manning said of the last-game question.

Manning said he has not had talks with the front office about either reworking or extending his contract, a four-year, \$84 million deal that ends after next season. He said those discussions would happen after this season.

The Giants have played better in the second half of the schedule, going 4-3. They lost last weekend on a last-minute touchdown to the Colts, and

blew a 12-point lead against Philadelphia on Nov. 25. The other loss was a 17-0 decision in the rain to Tennessee.

Manning said the Giants are trying to finish the season strong and build momentum.

"I can't remember how the last game of every season worked out," said Manning, who led the Giants to Super Bowl wins after the 2007 and '11 seasons. "I think we are building something. I think when you have new players, and a new team, and a bunch of new guys coming from one year that hopefully will be here next year, I think you are building kind of the character and a winning attitude. So, I think those things can carry over."

Rose returns to Chicago, leads T-Wolves to win



CHICAGO (AP)—For much of his seven seasons with the Bulls, Derrick Rose was a favorite son of Chicago. He was native born and virtually universally beloved.

Things, though, soured towards the end as injuries mounted. The former franchise player was traded in 2016 and serenaded with boos upon his return a few months later.

The 30-year-old is hoping Wednesday night began a new chapter in his relationship with his hometown.

Rose had 24 points and eight assists in just his second career game in the United Center against his former team, lifting the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 119-94 victory.

He was cheered loudly throughout by the sellout crowd of 21,852.

"It was great, man," he said. "I didn't expect it to be like this — overwhelming at some points. You can tell the support is still here."

Rose, the top pick in the 2008 draft, was named the NBA's most valuable player in 2011. He had missed Minnesota's previous game with a sore left ankle.

Because of an assortment of injuries, this was just his fourth career game against the Bulls. He said he got 50 tickets for family and friends.

"I'm happy I didn't change throughout this whole process," he said. "I remained myself. I stayed true to my family. There was a lot of people that jumped off the boat when I was going through things. I (saw) who they were. I know what's fake love and what's real love."

Karl-Anthony Towns had



Minnesota Timberwolves guard Derrick Rose (25) shoots over Chicago Bulls guard Kris Dunn during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2018, in Chicago.

16 for Miami, which was 6 for 12 from the foul line—while Toronto was 19 for 23.

James Johnson and Tyler Johnson each scored 12 for the Heat, while Wade had 10. Pascal Siakam added 10 for the Raptors.

Pistons 106, Wizards 95

In Detroit, Blake Griffin had 23 points and nine rebounds, Andre Drummond got his 10th straight double-double, and Detroit beat Washington.

Detroit had lost 9 of 11 but used a hot start in the third quarter to pull away. Drummond had 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Langston Galloway scored 22 points off the bench.

The Wizards lost for the eighth time in 10 games and are 4-16 on the road. John Wall had 21 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, and Bradley Beal scored 21 points.

Suns 122, Magic 120 OT

In Orlando, Devin Booker scored 35 points and T.J. Warren added 24 points, including all four Phoenix points in overtime, to lead the Suns.

Kelly Oubre Jr. scored had 19 points and Josh Jackson added 10 for Phoenix, which has won five of its last seven games.

D.J. Augustin led Orlando with 27 points and six assists. Nikola Vucevic had 22 points and 13 rebounds, and Terrence Ross scored 18 points off the bench. Orlando has lost four straight.

Phoenix outscored the Magic 4-2 in overtime. Vucevic hit a jumper with 4:26 left in the extra period to account for Orlando's only points on 1-for-10 shooting.

Pacers 129, Hawks 121

In Atlanta, Thaddeus Young scored 21 points, Domantas Sabonis and Tyreke Evans each added 19, and Indiana won its third straight game.

The Pacers have won 10 of 12. Indiana coach Nate McMillan used nine players, eight of whom finished in double figures.

Kent Bazemore tied a career high with 32 points, John Collins added 21 points and 11 rebounds and Dewayne Dedmon had 18 points and a season-best 15 rebounds for the rebuilding Hawks, who had won three straight.

The Hawks, who have the league's second-worst offense, stayed close by hitting 17 3-pointers.

LeBron has groin strain, Lakers say he's day to day

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (AP)—LeBron James got good news Wednesday on his injured groin.

But his games-played streak will end anyway.

An MRI exam showed that the four-time NBA MVP merely strained his left groin in the Los Angeles Lakers' victory at Golden State Warriors on Christmas night. James will likely be dealing with soreness for several days, and the Lakers said he won't travel with them for their game Thursday in Sacramento.

From there, he will be listed as day-to-day.

"Dodged a bullet," James tweeted.

Thursday will mark the first time James has sat since the final game of the 2016-17 regular season, which he took off for rest. James has played 156 consecutive games (including the playoffs).

The Lakers are 20-14 in James' first season in Hollywood, good enough for the No. 4 playoff seed in a loaded Western Conference. They haven't advanced to the playoffs since the 2012-13 season.

"Everybody's watching him," point guard Lonzo Ball said Tuesday of James, "and expecting him to pretty much bring us a championship and all these great things. But he needs a supporting cast."

Has the sixth-youngest roster in the NBA grown up enough to find their way without their superstar guiding the way? A similar core went 35-47 last season without James and important veterans such as JaVale McGee, Rajon Rondo and Lance Stephenson.

The James injury bug has

been unkind to his teams of the past. Over the past four seasons, the Cavaliers were 4-23 in games that James missed either for rest or injury (3-10 in 2014-15, 1-5 in 2015-16 and 0-8 in 2016-17), according to ESPN. James played in all 82 games last season, and he also had All-Star Kyrie Irving as his teammate for the first three seasons.

The Lakers' offense runs through James, who is putting up MVP-caliber numbers with 27.3 points, 8.3 rebounds and 7.1 assists per game. The Lakers have three other players averaging double digits (Kyle Kuzma: 18.1, Brandon Ingram: 15.5, JaVale McGee: 11.8). The scoring will have to come from somewhere else if James misses significant time.

The Lakers are No. 8 in the NBA in offense (113.2 points) compared to No. 11 (108.1) last season. It's unclear whether a player on the Lakers' blossoming roster has emerged to become a go-to player.

Without James' facilitating abilities, Ball and backup point guard Rajon Rondo would need to step up.

But all the intangible parts of James' game—his leadership, defensive tenacity and experience—don't always show up in the stat sheet. As scoring in the league has increased, the Lakers rank 18th in points allowed (111) compared to 25th in points allowed (109.6) last season.

In the Lakers' 127-101 upset win over the Warriors on Tuesday, James played only 21 minutes, but his teammates responded with him out. Six players scored in double figures.

20 points and 20 rebounds as the Timberwolves won their second straight on the road.

Zach LaVine had 28 points in 26 minutes off the bench and Lauri Markkanen added 16 for Chicago, which had won two straight and three of five before Wednesday. LaVine had missed the previous five games with a sprained left ankle.

"I thought he looked good and aggressive," Bulls coach Jim Boylen said of LaVine. "I like when he drives the ball. He attacked on his first two touches and sometimes that can get you going."

Both Rose and fellow former Bull Taj Gibson received loud ovations when they were announced during player introductions.

Towns scored the game's first basket, but it was Rose who set the tone early. He repeatedly attacked the basket—showing the form of earlier in

his career before the rash of leg injuries—and had 10 points (5-for-8 shooting) and five assists in the first quarter as Minnesota took a 29-18 lead.

The Timberwolves' advantage was up to 60-37 at halftime.

Rose had 19 points through three quarters as Minnesota took an 83-65 edge into the fourth.

The Bulls pulled within 91-74, but Rose stopped the momentum with a jumper and Dario Saric added a 3-pointer on the next possession for a 96-74 lead with just over seven minutes remaining.

Later in the fourth, the UC crowd started chanting, "MVP... MVP... MVP..." when Rose stepped to the foul line to complete a 3-point play.

"I had to crack a smile a little bit," he said. "It made me reminisce about some of the old days and how grateful I was to be in that position at a young age."

"With the year I'm having, it's very special to come back here and play."

Raptors 106, Heat 104

In Miami, Kawhi Leonard scored 30 points, Danny Green's 3-pointer with 22.7 seconds left put Toronto ahead for good and the Raptors improved the NBA's best record to 26-10 by topping the Heat.

Green had 18 points and Fred VanVleet added 16 for the Raptors, who survived a wild fourth quarter that saw 12 lead changes and four ties. Miami had three shots on the game's final possession, with Dwyane Wade and Justise Winslow missing 3s and Wade having a chance at a tip-in that wouldn't fall.

Winslow scored 21 points for Miami, which saw its five-game winning streak snapped. Josh Richardson scored 17 and Hassan Whiteside scored

Messi: Ronaldo rivalry very healthy and good for fans



SPAIN—Lionel Messi has called his rivalry with Cristiano Ronaldo “healthy” and said that it was good for fans.

The Argentine and Portuguese battled it out in La Liga for the better part of a decade after Ronaldo joined Real Madrid in 2009.

Barcelona star Messi and Ronaldo were the dominant forces in Spain and world football for much of their time in the league together, creating a natural rivalry between the pair.

During Ronaldo’s time with the Blancos, he won La Liga twice and lifted the Champions League four times.

Meanwhile, Messi has won an incredible nine La Liga titles (six of which were earned while Ronaldo was at Madrid) and also lifted the Champions League on four occasions.

Ronaldo’s spell in Spain ended prior to the current season, as the 33-year-old com-



pleted a sensational transfer to Juventus.

And Messi has claimed that the pair’s time at the top of the game in Spain was a positive

for football and for fans all over.

“The rivalry with Cristiano was very healthy and good for the fans,” the 31-year-old told



Marca.

In the individual award department, Messi and Ronaldo have each won the Ballon d’Or five times, creating a

duopoly on the award between 2008 and 2017.

That run was broken in 2018, with Ronaldo’s former Real Madrid team-mate Luka Modric lifting the prize and Messi controversially finishing fifth in the voting.

Messi finished behind Kylian Mbappe, Antoine Griezmann, Ronaldo and Modric, and has stated that he knew he would not win when he saw his competition for the award.

“I heard the nominees for the Ballon d’Or and I knew I wasn’t in the fight,” Messi said.

Despite all the success that Messi has had on the football pitch, he has insisted that there is still one higher priority in his life.

“I love football, but family is above all,” the Argentine stated.

AP
This combo photo shows Barcelona’s Lionel Messi, right, and Juventus’ Cristiano Ronaldo reacting during their separate games.

Meanwhile, Messi would love to have Neymar back at Barcelona but admitted Paris Saint-Germain are unlikely to let their star asset leave.

Neymar swapped Camp Nou for Parc des Princes in a world-record \$253M deal back in August 2017.

The 26-year-old spent four successful seasons at Barca, winning La Liga twice and the Champions League once, but a desire to step out of Messi’s shadow is believed to have motivated his unexpected exit.

Speculation persists that Neymar could yet seek a return to the Blaugrana and his Brazil teammate Arthur, who linked up with Spanish champions at the start of the season, said this week he was “praying” for the rumors to become reality.

Messi shares a similar view but holds reservations over the likelihood of PSG sanctioning the transfer.

“I see it as complicated,” the Barca captain said in a wide-ranging interview with Marca.

“We would love him to come back for what he means, both as a player and for the locker room.

“We are friends, we have lived very nice moments, others not so much, but we have spent a lot of time together. However, I find it very difficult [for him] to even leave Paris.

“PSG are not going to let Neymar get taken away.”

Serena voted AP Female Athlete of the Year for 5th time

NEW YORK—She reached the finals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open, proving again how well she can play no matter how little she practices.

Williams didn’t win those or any other tournaments, which in every other situation might have made for a forgettable year.

In 2018, it was a remarkable one.

Her rapid return to tennis after a health scare following childbirth was a victory in itself, and for that, Williams was voted The Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year for the fifth time.

Williams received 93 points in balloting by U.S. editors and news directors announced Wednesday, while gymnast Simone Biles was second with 68. Notre Dame basketball player Arike Ogunbowale was third, while Olympic snowboarder Chloe Kim and swimmer Katie Ledecky, the 2017 winner, rounded out the top five.

All of those players won a title or titles in 2018, while Williams had to settle for just coming close a couple of times.

Now 37 and a new mother facing some players who weren’t even born when she turned pro in 1995, Williams isn’t the same person who ruthlessly ran her way to 23 Grand Slam singles titles—the last of which came at the 2017 Australian Open when she was pregnant.

“I’m still waiting to get to be the Serena that I was, and I don’t know if I’ll ever be that, physically, emotionally, mentally. But I’m on my way,” Williams said on the eve of the U.S. Open final. “I feel like I still have a ways to go. Once I get there, I’ll be able to play even hopefully better.”

The Male Athlete of the Year will be announced Thursday.

The women’s award has

been won more only by Babe Didrikson Zaharias, whose six wins included one for track and five for golf.

Williams’ previous times winning the AP honor, in 2002, 2009, 2013 and 2015, were because of her dominance.

This one was about her perseverance.

Williams developed blood clots after giving birth to daughter Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr. on Sept. 1, 2017, and four surgeries would follow. She returned to the WTA Tour in March and played in just a pair of events before the French Open, where she competed in a skin-tight, full-length black catsuit.

She said the outfit—worn partly for health reasons because of the clots—made her feel like a superhero, but her game was rarely in superstar shape. She had to withdraw in Paris because of a right pectoral injury and didn’t

skills, Aninzo is also learning how to be independent and adapt to changes in York. He thanked CNMI national men’s team head coach Michiteru Mita for opening his eyes on how to survive the world where not everything you want and need are handed out to you.

“In one of our training camps off-island, coach Mita let us experienced how it was like to live in non-fancy hotels along the busiest streets in Hong Kong where all the comforts of life are not readily available. He asked us what should we do if we’re put in the rock-bottom situation, how are

we going to adapt to the culture, the environment, and the hardship,” Aninzo said.

“In York, I am experiencing that and I have to compose myself to get through this new life. I am staying in the dorm, cooking for myself, doing the laundry, and everything that I used to take for granted because there are people who do that for me back home. Now, I am learning how to be independent and more appreciative of the things I have and how I need to work hard to get them,” the Marianas High School graduate said.

Aninzo also thanked North-

play again until Wimbledon, where she lost to Angelique Kerber in the final.

Williams came up short again in New York, where her loss to Naomi Osaka in the final will be remembered best for her outburst toward chair umpire Carlos Ramos, who had penalized Williams for receiving coaching and later penalized her an entire game for calling him a “thief” while arguing.

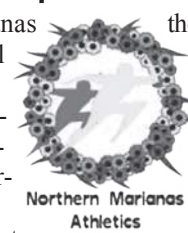
That loss leaves her one major title shy of Margaret Court’s record as she starts play next year in a WTA Tour that will look different in part because of new rules coming about after issues involving Williams. Players returning to the tour may use a “special ranking” for up to three years from the birth of a child, and the exemption can be used for seedings at big events. Also, the tour says players can wear leggings or compression shorts at its tournaments without a skirt over them.

ern Mariana Islands Football Association president Jerry Tan and other people who helped him make it to York and take the first step to move up to the pro ranks. He then encouraged his fellow CNMI players, especially the youth, to stay with the program despite the many obstacles they are battling right now and will be facing in the future.

“I know it’s been hard since Saipan was hit by Super Typhoon Yutu. But don’t lose hope and remain positive. We have to find ways on how a disadvantageous situation can work to our favor,” he said.

Race day signup on for Christmas relay

Northern Marianas Athletics will still accept registration for the 37th Annual Christmas Island Relay tomorrow morning.



the race will be donated to schools/students affected by Super Typhoon Yutu.

Teams interested in racing in tomorrow’s event must have five members and those competing in the open mixed division must have one runner in the 16 years old or younger age group, a female, or 40 years old or older. In the youth mixed division (U16 age group), a team has to have at least one female or U12 runner. Each member will alternately run one mile.

So far, eight teams have confirmed participation in NMA’s season-ending event for this year. Proceeds from (Saipan Tribune)

ADDITIONAL

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Terlaje. In the middleweight (166 lbs to 185 lbs), Guam’s Nick Brown and J.J. Ambross will be up against Kim, Tanzawa, Masga, Quan, and Van Der Maas.

Masga and Van Der Maas

will also compete in the light heavyweight class (186 lbs to 200 lbs) along with Cannon, Agda, and Ken Santos. For the heavyweight division (201 lbs and up), Kelvin “The Big Hit” Fitial is on top of the list and will be battling Cannon, Agnu, and Agda.

Matches will start at 9:30am.

ANINZO

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soccer move closer to that level. It’s like I am stepping out of my comfort zone, traveling halfway across the world to try to reach my goals, which are to make it to the pro and encourage other youth to stay dedicated to the sports and get education so that when we return to the islands, we can have something to give back to the people of the CNMI and other isolated countries,” the former MP United Football Club goalkeeper said.

Besides polishing his soccer

Kanoa Football Club U15 vs Wings

PHOTOS By GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



A Kanoa Football Club U15 player is sandwiched by two Wings defenders during their game in the Guam-NMI Friendlies last week at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Dededo.

A Kanoa player tries to dribble away from Wings defenders.



Kanoa keeper Jonathan Mindanao, right, attempts to catch the ball hit by a Wings player.



Kanoa's Markus Toves attempts to score.



Kanoa's John Mark Anastacio, right, beats a Wings player to the ball.



Kanoa's Markus Toves, steals the ball as a Wings player trips.



Merrick Toves, center, leads Kanoa's attack.



Jim Kurt Maniago controls the ball.

Rose returns to Chicago, leads T-Wolves to win

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Aninzo steps out of comfort zone



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Many-time national team player Christopher Aninzo took the road less traveled and is determined to continue the challenging journey on his way to making it to the pro ranks and inspiring the CNMI youth.

Aninzo, who this year suited up for the Blue Ayuyus in the EAFF E-1 Football Championships 2019 Round 1 in Mongolia this year, is back on Saipan, taking a break from his studies at York St. John University in the United Kingdom where he is also enrolled in a program handled by pro-

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Christopher Aninzo does catching drills during one of his training sessions at York St. John University in the United Kingdom.

fessional soccer coaches.

"I am taking up International Business Management and is with York St. John University's soccer program (with i2i International Soccer Academy)," said Aninzo, who decided to head to Europe to study and play soccer instead of going to the U.S. mainland just like what other CNMI players do.

"I got a call from an online recruitment site and they asked if I am interested at coming over to York. I thought about it for a while, knowing that if I do come and stay there, it will be a very difficult setup up for me and my family—new people, new environment, new culture. I came in March and committed to the program, so I returned in York in September," said Aninzo.

At the York St. John University, the 19-year-old trains under former Manchester

United and York City midfielder Jonathan Greening and Bryan Hughes—another former English pro.

"The training—individually and in group—is way high in terms of standards. You need a strong mindset and must be in top physical shape to keep up with the program and the players. I go to the gym every morning, do rehab, and attend the team's training. It's a bit similar to what we are doing in the CNMI national team, but the level is just some notches higher," said Aninzo.

He attends the soccer program from 2pm to 6pm and goes to school from 9am to 12pm on weekdays. On top of the four-hour soccer session every day, York St. John plays in two leagues (universities and soccer academies matches), three to four times a week in the evening or late afternoon.

"It's tough, very physically challenging, and I am overwhelmed, but I like it—it's something I have imagined before. It gives me an entirely different perspective on how soccer is played there and what we can do to help CNMI

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The CNMI's Christopher Aninzo, 11th from left back row, poses with York St. John University players and their coaches after a training session in York, United Kingdom.

Additional fighters for Art of War 13

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A few more fighters signed up for Art of War 13: Submission Grappling Tournament that will take place tomorrow at the Trench Tech Gym in Garapan.

In the purple belt absolute (Gi) division, Guam's Peter Carbullido and Saipan's Jose Mafnas are added on the competitors list and will be battling Rey Kim, Beng Masga, Ken Tanzawa, and Shane "Pikaboo" Alvarez. For the brown belt absolute, Guam's John Aguon Jr. is the latest addition and will be up against

compatriot Kenji Okiyama and Mark Smith and Trech Tech founder and Art of War 13 organizer Cuki Alvarez.

In the two other divisions—white and blue belts absolute—the rosters are the same. Jasper Van Der Maas will headline the white belt competitors list, which also includes Kier Ada, Jose Quan, and Danny Feltnier. The blue belt absolute has the most participants among the four divisions with six—Jeff Garcia, Paulo Sangalang, Giovanni Taitingfong, Franklin Santos,

Mark Nuique, and Guam's Phoenix Cannon.

In the No Gi contest, the welterweight class (146 lbs to 165 lbs), drew the most competitors with eight. Gordon Salas was added on the list that has Sangalang, Nuique, Shane and Cuki, Okiyama, Taitingfong, and Tanzawa.

Taitingfong is also entered in the No Gi lightweight division (100 lbs to 145 lbs) and will be squaring off against Franklin Santos and Piling

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Trench Tech fighters, headed by Cuki Alvarez, center, will be competing in tomorrow's Art of War 13: Submission Grappling Tournament.